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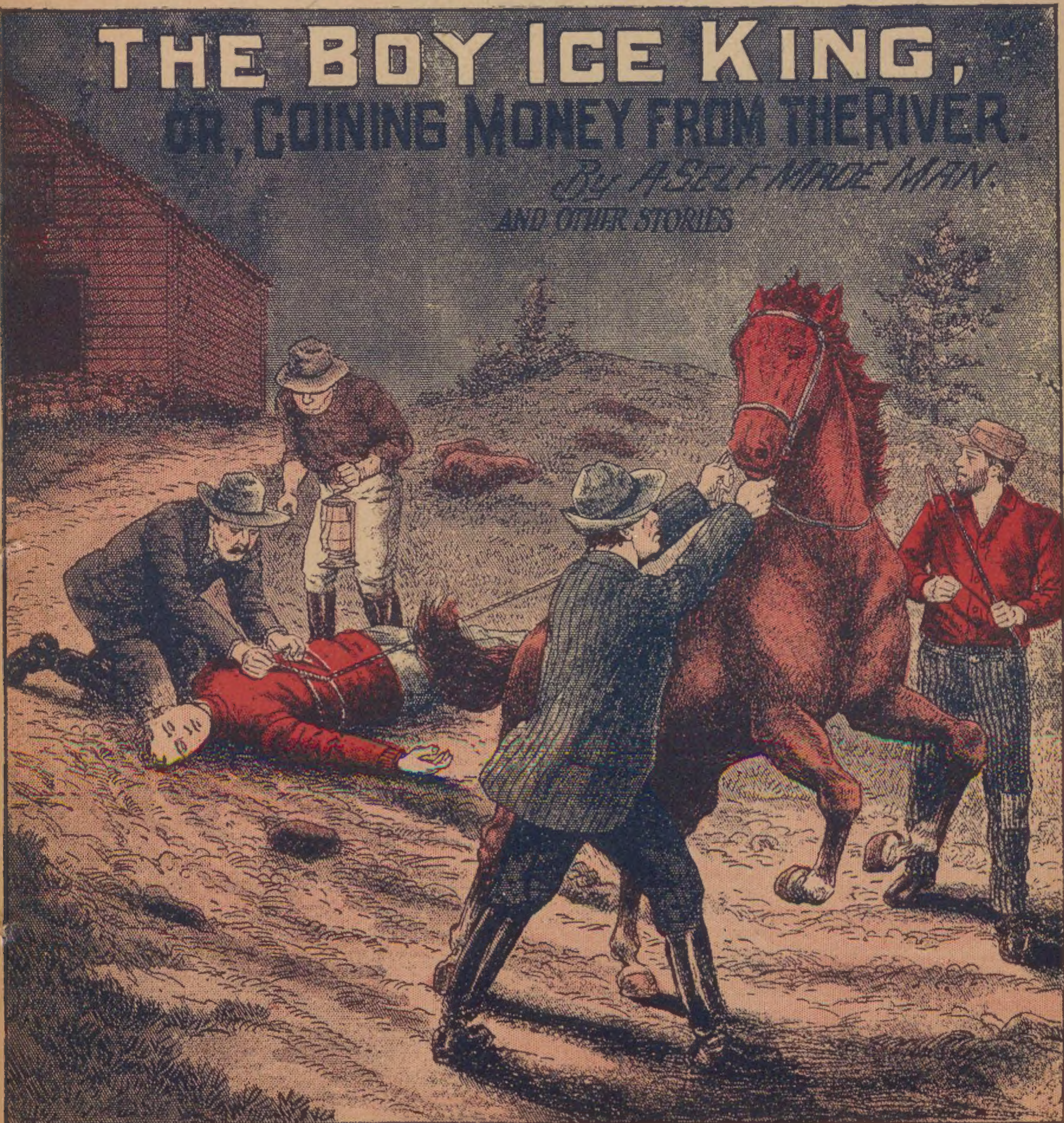
FAME AND

FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

THE BOY ICE KING, OR, COINING MONEY FROM THE RIVER.

*By A SELF MADE MAN.
AND OTHER STORIES*



"The mare is in foine fettle to-night. It's a gallus ride she'll be after givin' him," chuckled Limerick as he held the lantern so that Donohue could see to fasten the rope around the body of the half-dazed boy.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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THE BOY ICE KING

OR, COINING MONEY FROM THE RIVER

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

CHAPTER I.—The Last Straw.

"I suppose it's the same story you've come home with—you haven't found a job?" said Ezra Norton, a small, unpleasant-looking man, glaring at a bright-eyed, stalwart boy of some eighteen years, who had just entered the sitting-room of an unpretentious two-story house in a cheap neighborhood of the city of B——, where Mr. Norton, who was a pettifogging lawyer, was reading the afternoon newspaper.

"It isn't my fault, sir," replied Jack Harding earnestly.

"Oh, no, of course not," replied the lawyer sarcastically. "You've been out of work two weeks now, and yet you can't find anything to do. Well, I don't believe it," he added harshly. "You don't want to work. You want to live in my house on the fat of the land and play the gentleman. Well, I won't have it, d'ye understand?"

"I've tried my best to get something to do, but times are very dull, and——"

"Bah! Don't tell me that. This late panic, which threw a few people out of work, is used by lazy persons like yourself as an excuse to avoid exerting themselves. A boy can always get work."

"Well, if you know of any place where I stand a chance of getting a job I'll——"

"It isn't my place to find work for you," snapped Mr. Norton. "I've got quite enough to do to look after myself."

"Maybe I'll catch on to something to-morrow," said Jack hopefully.

"That's what you've been saying right along. Maybe you'll find something to-morrow. To-morrow never comes with some people, and it's my opinion you're one of them."

"You do me an injustice, sir," remonstrated the boy.

"Eh? What's that? How dare you say that? Haven't I fed and clothed you, and sent you to school, ever since your father dumped you on my hands?"

"My father paid you to take care of me," replied Jack stoutly.

"Who said he did?" blazed up the lawyer hotly.

"Mrs. Marsh, your former housekeeper, told me so."

"She told you what wasn't true. What did she know about it?"

"She was with you when my father left me with you to take care of till he came back——"

"From a harum-scarum trip to South America,

where he expected to make his fortune. Well, he didn't make his fortune, as I suppose. He put in several years as a superintendent in the Brazilian diamond fields and then he died, and that was the end of him and his prospects."

The lawyer spoke without a bit of sympathy in his tones for the memory of the man who had been a friend to him when he needed one so bad that he'd have gone to the State prison for a defalcation if Frederick Harding had not come to his aid. But then Ezra Norton was one of those men who could not afford to sympathize with any one but themselves. He was mean, narrow-minded and unprincipled. As a lawyer he had no standing at the bar, and the cases he handled were mostly damage suits which he secured from poor people on the sharing principle, and which he generally lost if they came to trial, but more often compromised to his advantage without reference to his client's interests. The legal fraternity and the judges had very little respect for him, but they could not ignore him. His unblushing nerve was probably never more fittingly shown than on a certain occasion when he brought suit against a street railway corporation on behalf of a poor widow for an alleged injury. He lost the case, but the jury, out of sympathy for the woman, handed their fees, amounting to twelve dollars, over to her.

She gratefully thanked the foreman and started to go. Before she could get out of the court room Mr. Norton pounced on her and took the money away from her, on the grounds that she owed him twice as much for court fees. Several of the jurymen saw the act and indignantly appealed to the judge, but were told that the woman had no legal redress, as it was doubtless a fact that the pettifogger had advanced money in order to bring the suit. The reader might therefore wonder that a man of Mr. Norton's character would accept the temporary guardianship of a boy of ten, which was Jack's age when he came to live with him, unless there was something in it for him. Jack always believed that his father had paid Mr. Norton well for taking care of him, and consequently he was much surprised when the lawyer, on the present occasion, denied that he had received a cent for doing so.

"Do you mean to say that my father did not pay you for looking after me?" he said earnestly.

"That's just what I do mean to say," replied Ezra Norton emphatically. "He went away after telling me that he would send me the money as

soon as he made it. I took his word for it, and that's all the good it did me. So you see you're nothing but a charity boy after all."

A charity boy! The words, more than the spiteful tone in which they were uttered, struck Jack like a blow in the face. He had a certain amount of pride in his composition, and it wounded him deeply to think that such an allegation could with truth be applied to him. His soul was in arms in a moment and his resolution made. If his dead father had, through unpropitious circumstances, failed to keep his word, he would make the matter good himself, and wipe the stain away. He had already done something toward that end, for during the three years he had been at work he had turned over most of his wages to the lawyer with unflinching regularity on his pay days. Furthermore, as he was out of work, he would relieve Mr. Norton of all responsibility as to his keep, and make his own way in the world somehow. If he had to go hungry, or even sleep in the streets, he would face the ordeal unflinchingly, feeling that at least he was independent. After ascertaining how much the lawyer claimed was due him from his father, he would, as soon as possible, remit the money to him in small sums till the debt was squared, after that he would be through with Mr. Norton for good.

"You say I'm a charity boy, and taunt me with the fact, as though it were a crime," said Jack bitterly. "Well, you shan't have any cause to do so again."

"What do you mean?" asked the lawyer, attracted by his attitude.

"I mean that I intend to leave your house at once and never return to it. I mean that I intend to repay you every dollar you claim is due you as soon as I get work. I mean that from this moment I shall be a boy only in years and stature—a man in purpose and resolution. That's what I mean, and you will find I'll make good, too," replied Jack, in a tone that showed he meant it.

Ezra Norton was visibly surprised and somewhat discomfited. He did not want the boy to leave, since it was money in his pocket to hold on to him, for he was sure to get work before long, and then Mr. Norton figured on receiving the bulk of his wages as before. Feeling that he had been a little bit too hasty in his treatment of the boy, he tried to smooth matters over. Jack, however, would not be placated. The lawyer's words had hurt him to the quick, and he felt that he couldn't stay another night in Mr. Norton's house under any consideration.

"Supper is ready," said Mrs. Skinner, the housekeeper, poking her head in at the door at that moment.

"Come, Jack, we'll adjourn to the dining-room and let the matter drop," said the lawyer in a friendly way.

The boy made no reply. He didn't intend to enjoy any more of Mr. Norton's hospitality. Things had come to an unpleasant head, and he would have despised himself had he yielded after making up his mind what course he intended to pursue. He went to his room and began packing his trunk and a small bag. While he was thus engaged the housekeeper came up, sent by the lawyer, to persuade him to come down to the meal. He declined to do so. Finding that he really intended to quit the house, Mr. Norton got mad and

told Mrs. Skinner not to let his trunk go when he sent for it.

"I'll teach the young rascal to go contrary to my wishes," he said to himself. "When he finds that he can't get his trunk he'll change his mind and knuckle down. I'm not going to let a good thing get away from me so easy as that. No, no; that isn't the way I do business," he concluded with a chuckle, as he rubbed his hands one over the other, as if washing them in invisible soap and water.

At that moment the street door opened and shut as Jack passed out.

"Let him go," grinned the lawyer. "He'll be back. Oh, yes, he'll be back."

But that was where the lawyer was wrong—he didn't know Jack Harding.

CHAPTER II.—The Murder in the House of Red.

Jack took the small bag away with him, intending to send for his trunk as soon as he had found a small furnished room in which to put it. On leaving the house he made a bee-line for a restaurant several blocks away. He was hungry after his all-day tramp after work, and as he had several dollars, representing his savings, in his pocket, there was no danger of his going hungry for a few days at any rate, and he hoped to get work before his finances gave out entirely. It was now dark, and he found he had selected a poor night to branch out for himself, as a dense fog was blowing up the estuary from the ocean, and settling down over the city. After eating a hearty supper he stood on the corner of the street, looking into the misty atmosphere and wondering where he would look for a room. On such a night he felt that it was necessary for him to get under cover. He almost regretted that he had not remained at Mr. Norton's house until the morning; but when he recalled the lawyer's insulting words he took courage and felt glad that he had not stayed there a moment longer than was necessary. After considering his situation for a few moments he returned to the restaurant and asked the proprietor if he knew where he could get a small furnished room. The man referred him to a street a few blocks away, and told him that there were a number of houses in that neighborhood where furnished rooms were to be had. Jack thanked him and set out to find the street. As he had lived all of eight years in the city of B——, he was pretty familiar with the lay of the town. By the time he had located the street the fog was thicker than ever. The street lamps looked dim and ghostly in the mist, and could hardly see the fronts of the houses. They were nearly all three-story brick dwellings on the side he was on, rather shabby through lack of paint and repairs, and each separated from its neighbor by perhaps six or eight feet, the space being divided by a fence about eight feet high. They stood back from the sidewalk maybe a dozen feet, and this space was flagged up to the low iron railing in front. Beneath the first floor was a low basement, partly below the level of the street, to which entrance was to be had through a gate under the steps leading up to the front door. The restaurant man had told him that furnished rooms were to be had in most of these houses.

cheap and that a small notice above the front door bell would tell him where to apply. He could not expect to see these notices on such a night from the sidewalk, so the only course open to him was to enter the paved area and walk up the front steps to get a close look at the bell knob. This he proceeded to do, but the first three houses he investigated had no notice out, though there were signs that such a paper had been there. Concluding that no accommodations were to be had there, he went on to the fourth house. This house was a bit different from the others in the block, inasmuch as it looked to be in better shape than the others, and in addition, had a blood-red lamp shining through the glass over the hall door. As Jack bent down to look above the bell-knob the door opened suddenly and a man, muffled up to his ears, with a slouch hat drawn down over his eyes, rushed out, almost throwing the boy down. The man himself slipped on the damp stone step and fell on one knee, throwing out one arm to save himself from rolling down the steps. Something struck Jack on the cheek and fell upon the step.

"I beg your pardon, sir, I—" began the boy, but the man cut him short with an imprecation, picked himself up and rushed off into the night and fog.

The boy put out his foot to retreat, for after that encounter he guessed he didn't want to take a room there even if there was one to be got, when he stepped on something hard. Bending down, he picked it up and saw that it was a large finger ring. It was clearly an expensive one, for the band was wide and of very solid gold, while the setting was a good-sized ruby surrounded by small diamonds.

"That's what struck me on the cheek," thought Jack. "It belongs to the man who butted into me as he came out. He was evidently in a great hurry, for he didn't miss his loss. Well, it's my place to ring the bell and hand the ring to somebody connected with the house to give him when he gets back."

Then it was he noticed that the man had left the hall door partly open, which Jack thought was very careless on his part. As he reached for the bell-knob he was startled by hearing a wild scream from the interior of the house. A second and third scream followed—thrilling in their intensity.

"Good Lord!" he exclaimed. "What's up? Some woman is in trouble."

Instinctively he stepped inside, shutting the door behind him. He heard loud cries and moans of grief proceeding from a floor above. The red light shone on a red carpet in the hall, on a red stair carpet, and on the red-tinted walls. Everything almost was red, and the boy's eyes were filled with the color. The cries continuing, and seemingly those of a young girl, Jack felt that it was his duty to investigate. Accordingly he bounded up the stairs and landed on the second floor, lighted by a gas jet surrounded by a pink globe. The same reddish tint was on the walls, and the carpet similar to that below. He saw an open door before him leading into a large back room. The cries came from this room, and Jack started for it. The light that shone through the doorway was subdued, but reddish. He paused on the threshold and looked in. The room was well furnished, with red-tinted walls, and a red

carpet. There were two tall windows, the red shades of which were drawn down, partly concealed by red drapery. Between them stood a large Spanish mahogany desk, above which hung a Moorish lamp attached to the ceiling by three long bronze chains. On the floor, as if he had fallen from the heavy leather-covered chair, lay an elderly man with a bald head, attired in a red dressing-gown. One arm was thrown out at full length, and he lay perfectly motionless. Over him, in an attitude of deep grief, moaned a girl of perhaps fifteen years, dressed in a maroon-colored gown. Her golden hair was loose, and streamed down her back to her waist.

"What's the trouble, miss?" asked Jack, advancing into the room.

At the sound of his voice she turned her face toward him. It was wet with tears and convulsed with grief. For all that it was a face of great beauty, perfect in every line.

"Oh, heaven!" she cried. "My poor grandfather! I fear he is dead—murdered!"

"Murdered!" gasped Jack.

"Yes! Stabbed by this!" and she held up a thin steel blade, the hilt of which was of burnished silver, while the handle was covered with jewels of various kinds, some of which glittered brightly in the light of the lamp.

It was a valuable and uncommon weapon, evidently of foreign origin. Jack went over and knelt beside the body. Even he could see that the old man was quite dead. His eyes were half closed, and had a glassy look. His jaw was relaxed, showing his teeth. He had been stabbed in the heart, and his death had been almost instantaneous.

"He is dead," said the boy in a subdued tone. The girl began to weep afresh.

"My poor grandfather. The only friend and companion I had in the world! Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?"

"Who killed him?" asked Jack.

"I don't know. He was a customer of grandfather's."

"A customer!"

"Yes. Grandfather's business was lending money at interest. People have been coming here every day almost for years to borrow and repay their loans."

Jack glanced at the safe beside the desk, but it was shut. On the desk stood a box containing papers. There were valuable ornaments on top of the desk, and all about the room, on stands and shelves and brackets. Nothing had been disturbed, neither were there any signs of a struggle. Even the big ruby on the old man's hand, of undoubted value, which might easily have been slipped off, was there on the hand that was stretched out. Robbery had either not been the motive for the crime, or the villain had been frightened away at the moment he struck the blow. Jack instantly thought of the man who had collided with him at the hall door. There was no doubt in his mind that he was the assassin. It was a great pity he had been unable to see his face. Still, he had the ring that came off his finger, a ring that showed he was no ordinary person, and this might prove a valuable clue to laying bare his identity.

"I'm so sorry for you, miss," said Jack, in a tone so full of sympathy that the girl looked

earnestly at him through her long, tear-stained eyelashes. "Are you alone in the house?"

"Yes. Grandfather and I lived by ourselves. The only visitors we had were those who called on business."

"Your grandfather seems to have been well off. By the way, why is there so much red about the house? The carpets, walls, and even the lights are of that color."

"Grandfather had a disease of the eyes which necessitated his being surrounded by red tints."

"Well, I suppose the police ought to be notified about this crime at once, in order that the murderer may be brought to justice as soon as possible."

"Yes. There is a telephone on grandfather's desk. The police station call is on the card attached to it. Poor grandfather always kept that handy in case of necessity, but unfortunately he had no chance to use it to-night."

"That dagger—does it belong to the murderer?" asked Jack as he went to the desk.

"No. It belonged to grandfather. It was one of his treasures. It is two hundred years old, and very valuable."

Jack rang up the police station and told the office about the murder. He was told that a policeman and a detective would be sent to the house right away. The boy hung up the receiver, went to the sorrow-stricken girl, and lifting her gently, asked her if there wasn't another room they could go to.

"Yes. The front one."

"Then come," he said. "This is no place for you."

"Oh, I can't leave poor grandfather," she sobbed, leaning her golden head on his shoulder, as if he were her brother.

"You can do your grandfather no good by remaining here," he said in a soothing tone, and placing his arm around her waist led her into the hallway, and thence into the front room, which was fitted up as a sitting-room.

CHAPTER III.—Amine and Jack.

They seated themselves on a divan, leaving the door open so that they could hear the front door bell when the officers called.

"Tell me how you came to enter the house. Did you hear me scream?" asked the girl. "And how did you get in the house?"

"Yes. I was standing at the door, which the murderer left ajar, when I heard your cries, and feeling sure something was wrong, I ran upstairs."

He then told her how he had come into that block looking for a furnished room and was examining the door bell of each house in that row in turn to find the notice of a room to let within.

"Now, will you tell me your name?" he said. "Mine is Jack Harding."

"Mine is Amine Falkland. Grandfather's name was Peter von Stroom. My father was an Englishman, and my mother was born in Amsterdam. I was left an orphan at ten, and then grandfather took charge of me. Now that he is dead I am all alone in the world, without a single friend, and hardly an acquaintance."

Her tears broke out afresh.

"Don't cry, Amine. I will be your friend, if you will let me."

"Will you?" she cried wistfully. "Will you, really?"

"Yes. I will be a friend and brother to you. I am an orphan myself, and haven't a real friend in the world either. I will look after you as well as I can, though if you are heiress of all your grandfather's property you will find lots of people willing to take charge of you."

"I don't want anybody to take charge of me if you will be my friend," she said. "I feel I can trust you, for you have a face that I like."

"You can trust me, Amine, and you may be sure that I never will deceive you."

"I am sure you won't."

"I suppose the public administrator will take charge of your grandfather's property in your interest, and he will see that you are properly provided for. As for myself, I've got to hustle for a living, for my future depends on myself alone."

"But I will help you, Jack. I shall have money, and I will share it with you."

"No," replied the boy, shaking his head, "you can't share anything with me. What I get I'm going to make myself. I'm not a sponger. I should think very small of myself if I took advantage of your friendship and confidence and made use of a part of your property. I'm not built that way. I ask you only for your friendship, and you can give me as much of that as you want to. I shall appreciate it, as I feel you are a good girl. If you should need my protection I'll stand by you through fire and water. If you don't need it we can at least be true friends."

"Yes, we will be true friends—always," she said earnestly. "I feel as if I had known you a long time. You have come to me in my hour of need, and I shall always be grateful to you."

"Then we will be brother and sister to each other, shall we?"

"Yes."

He drew her to him, and, lifting her face to his, kissed her. She blushed a little, and looked shyly into his eyes.

"You are so good," she said.

At that moment the bell rang.

"There's the police, I guess," he said. "I will answer the bell myself."

A detective and policeman were at the door.

"So Von Stroom, the money lender, was murdered here to-night?" said the detective.

"Yes. Stabbed in the heart by a customer of his," replied Jack.

"Ah! You know the man, then?" said the sleuth in a tone of satisfaction.

"No, he is not known either by me or the old man's granddaughter."

"Where is she?"

"Upstairs, in the front room."

"And where did the murder take place?"

"In the back room, which Mr. Von Strom used as his office."

"Any witnesses to the crime?"

"No. The old gentleman and his assassin were alone when the deed was done."

"Where was his granddaughter at the time?"

"In her room. She heard her grandfather cry out and rushed down, only to find him dead on the floor."

"And you, young man—where were you when

the crime was committed?" asked the detective sharply.

"Outside on the stoop."

"And how did the murderer escape?"

"By the front door."

"Indeed! Then why didn't you nab him?"

"Because at the time I was not aware he had committed a crime."

"But you saw him?"

"I did."

"And could identify him if you saw him again?"

"No, I could not."

"Why not?"

"Because of the darkness and the fog, and also because he was muffled up in an overcoat, and had his hat pulled down over his eyes."

"What's your name, young man?"

"Jack Harding."

"Do you live here?"

"I do not."

"How is it that you happen to be here at the time a crime is committed?"

Jack explained.

"Well, we will go upstairs. Don't leave the house without my permission," and he gave the policeman a sign, which that individual understood as meaning he must keep a sharp eye on the boy.

They went upstairs and entered the room where the body of Peter Von Strom lay just as it had fallen.

"Is everything just as it was when the murder was committed?" asked the detective.

"I believe so," replied Jack. "Amine Falkland was the first on the scene."

"I will talk to her presently. This is evidently the weapon that did the business," said the sleuth, picking up the dagger. "A foreign weapon and a valuable one. An excellent clue."

"I'm afraid not," said Jack. "It did not belong to the murderer, but to the old gentleman."

"Are you sure of that?" asked the detective, evidently disappointed.

"I have my information from the young lady."

The sleuth went over the room, after examining the body and straightening it out, while the policeman remained at the door. After he had seen all he wanted for the present, he started for the front room, where Amine was seated alone with her grief. The sleuth questioned her closely, but got very little more information than he had already extracted from Jack.

"You say you were looking for lodgings?" he said, finally turning to the boy.

"Yes, sir."

"Where did you live last?"

"With Mr. Ezra Norton, of No. — Blank Street, for the last eight years."

"Eight years, eh? How old are you?"

"Eighteen."

"Is he a relative of yours?"

"No, sir."

"How came you to become a member of his family at such an early age as ten?"

"My father placed me in his care when he went to South America."

"And your father is there yet, I suppose?"

"No, he is dead."

"How came you to leave Mr. Norton's house after being there so long?"

"He said things to me to-night that I wouldn't stand for."

"Hum! And so you thought you'd break off relations, eh?"

"Yes. I am done with him. I shall hoe my own row after this."

"Mr. Norton is a lawyer, I believe?"

"He is. Perhaps you have heard of him."

The detective had heard of Ezra Norton, had seen him several times, in fact, and knew nothing good of him.

"Well, young man, I'll have to keep track of you for the present, as you are a witness in the case. You must remain in this house to-night, and to-morrow I'll see what I'll do about you. Remember, the officer will keep an eye on you."

"I'm not going to run away," replied Jack.

"You won't get a chance to do it, I fancy," replied the sleuth grimly.

"Do you mean to say that you're going to hold me a prisoner?"

"I'm going to see that I can put my hands on you when I want you. If I chose I could take you to the station and lock you up. As I believe you have been honest in your statements to me, I'll allow you to remain here. The young lady perhaps can accommodate you with a room."

"Yes, he can have the room next to mine on the floor above," said Amine.

"Then you'll be well fixed for the night," said the detective. "The coroner will be here shortly, and to-morrow or the next day you'll have to appear at the inquest. As you have no home, or any ties binding you to this city, it is likely you will be required to furnish some guarantee to insure your appearance at any time the authorities may require your presence as a witness in this case."

The sleuth then left the room and soon after the house.

CHAPTER IV.—Jack Gets a Job with an Ice Company.

Jack and Amine remained together for nearly an hour, and then the coroner and two or three reporters appeared on the scene. The coroner, after viewing the remains, gave permission for an undertaker to take charge of the body. As neither Amine nor Jack knew any one in the business, the coroner telephoned a man he knew and the undertaker came in due time and embalmed the body. Jack made it his business to see that none of the dead man's valuables were disturbed, and as soon as the undertaker had finished the embalming process he told him to lay the body out down in the parlor on the first floor. Then he locked the door of the room containing the money lender's treasures and gave the key to Amine, whom he persuaded to retire for the night. After a short talk with the policeman in charge of the house he went to the room that had been assigned to him and turned in himself.

Amine prepared breakfast next morning, and they ate it together. The officer in charge during the night had been relieved by another, who had also received orders not to let Jack leave the place, so he passed the time in the girl's company. After dinner they were both summoned to attend the inquest, which was held in the house. When it was over the coroner told Jack he would either have to give a bond for his appearance when wanted, or go to the house of detention for witnesses, where he might have to stay a long time.

Jack replied that the only person he could ask to go on his bond was Mr. Norton, and he didn't care to do that. It was a question, anyway, whether any judge would accept the lawyer's bond unless he gave a cash one, and it wasn't likely he would give that to keep the boy at liberty. Accordingly the coroner ordered a policeman to take Jack to his new quarters. The boy begged to be allowed to remain in the house with Amine until her grandfather was buried, and some arrangements had been made for her future.

The coroner finally consented to let him remain in charge of an officer. After supper, to which the policeman was invited, Jack proposed to Amine that they look over her grandfather's papers together and see if he had left a will. She agreed to this, and they went to the old man's office. The papers in his desk threw no light on the subject, but a bulky sealed envelope was found addressed to the girl. She opened it and found a letter from her grandfather instructing her what to do in the event of his death. He said his will, giving her all his property, would be found in a certain part of the safe, and he appended the combination so that the safe could be unlocked.

She was instructed to take the will to a certain lawyer, whose address he gave, and place it in his hands for probate. The court would then appoint a guardian to look after her till she became of age. Enclosed in the envelope was an itemized schedule of all his property, giving the value he placed on his various artistic treasures, and indicating the amount of money he had in bank at the time he drew up the paper. According to the paper the girl would be worth about \$50,000, which represented quite a little fortune to her. Her grandfather requested that she would not part with his treasured curios unless the time came when she needed the money, which he thought was not likely to happen, and told her to have them boxed under her supervision and deposited in a safe deposit vault for safe keeping until she married and could use them in decorating her home.

"Dear grandfather!" said Amine tearfully. "He was always thinking of me."

"Why shouldn't he, when you were the only one he had to think about?" replied Jack. "You will be a rich girl when everything is settled up."

"I suppose so; but I would dearly love to share my fortune with you," she said.

"That would be a foolish thing for you to do if I let you do it, which I wouldn't. If I saw a venture where the use of a little money would give me a boost, I might ask you to loan me the money, but I would pay back every cent. It is my ambition to succeed in life through my own exertions, and I intend to do it if I live."

"But as I look upon you as a brother I should like to help you along," said Amine earnestly.

"Don't you worry about me. I'll get on all right. Just hold on to your wealth the best you know how, and then you'll be all right. We'll put the will back in the safe now, with the letter, and after the funeral to-morrow morning you can take the will to the lawyer whose address is on it. You'd better take the letter with you, too, and let him read it. He will no doubt provide you with a suitable and trustworthy companion to stay with you in this house."

"And you will stay, too, won't you?" she said eagerly.

"How can I, when I've got to go to the house of detention for witnesses?"

"I think it's a shame."

"I think so also, for the Lord knows how long I'll be kept there, since they haven't caught the murderer yet, and they may never catch him. If the coroner would only take my word the authorities would be just as sure of me as if they locked me up in a cell. This is one of the disadvantages of having any connection with a crime that has been committed, when you're not a fixture in the place. The coroner told me that as I had no relatives or fixed residence I was just like a rolling stone—here to-day and perhaps gone to-morrow. I don't see, anyway, what I amount to as a witness. I'm sure I couldn't identify the assassin unless I saw him under similar circumstances, and even then how could I be sure of him?"

At Amine's earnest request Jack was allowed to go with her to the funeral of her grandfather next morning, but a policeman went with them in the carriage. Returning, the carriage took them to the lawyer's office, and there Jack bade the girl good-by for the present, promising to call on her as soon as he obtained his liberty. To his surprise he was set free on the order of a judge a few hours later. It was Amine who did it. After arranging her own business with the lawyer, who was one of the prominent men of the bar in the city, she spoke to him about Jack and asked him to do something for him. Her evident interest in the boy induced the lawyer to act at once. He drew up an affidavit for her to sign, and with this he subsequently went before a judge and guaranteed that the boy should appear when needed. That was enough to free Jack, and he made his way as quickly as he could to Amine's home, and was received by her with great joy. He arranged to take up his residence at the house, and next morning he took an expressman around to Mr. Nortons' house to get his trunk. Mrs. Skinner refused to give it up.

"On what ground do you hold it?" demanded Jack indignantly.

"I'm acting on Mr. Norton's orders. He told me not to let you have it."

"He has no right to keep my trunk, and I insist on having it."

Mrs. Skinner, however, wouldn't let it go, so Jack had to return to his new home without it.

"Call on my lawyer and ask him how you can get it," said Amine, when he told her about the matter. "I'll give you a note to him."

Jack called on the lawyer. After hearing the boy's story he sent his chief clerk with Jack to Mr. Norton's office with a demand for an order on his housekeeper for the trunk. As the pettifogger knew he had no legal right to hold Jack's trunk, he reluctantly gave the required order, and so the boy got his trunk. That afternoon a companion and housekeeper for Amine arrived, secured by the lawyer, and she took charge at once. Jack spent the rest of the week looking for work, but was not successful in getting any. The murderer of Peter Von Strom was still at large, though the detectives were hunting for him. The only real clue they had was the valuable ruby ring which Jack had handed to the detective first put on the case with an explanation of how it came into his possession. Nothing had been said in the papers about the ring, as the detective believed it good policy to keep that matter to him-

self. Before handing it to the detective Jack had carefully examined the ring, and on the inner side of the band had seen the following: "From M. C. to C. T."

He called the sleuth's attention to the engraved initials when he turned the article over to him. On Sunday morning Jack saw in the papers an advertisement which attracted his attention. A large ice company wanted a clerk at their storage houses a hundred miles or more from B—— on the Penobscot River. Applicants were told to apply by letter to main office in B——, enclosing reference and office experience. Jack wrote a letter to the ice company at once, referring to his former employers, and also, at Amine's suggestion, to her lawyer. A few days afterward he received a reply, directing him to call. He did so, and after a brief interview got the job. He was handed a letter by the manager and directed to take a train to the small town of Elmdale and report to the superintendent of the storage houses. Amine didn't like the idea of parting from her new friend, to whom she had become very much attached, but Jack told her that he'd write to her often, and that he'd expect to hear from her just as frequently. He assured her that absence would only make him think more of her, and that some day, when he got up in the world, he hoped to make her his own true wife if she would wait for him. She promised, with tears in her eyes, that she would never marry anybody but him, and so, after exchanging vows of affection and fidelity, they parted.

CHAPTER V.—Jack Rises in the Business.

A few hours later Jack reached Elmdale with his trunk and reported to the superintendent at the ice company's storage houses. The boss of the plant gave him a general insight into his new duties, and after directing him to a boarding-house within easy reach of the establishment, told him to take the rest of the day in getting settled and come in the morning. Jack hadn't been a week in the office before he had established himself on friendly footing with the superintendent. The season for shipping the ice down the river had just begun, and he found his hands full of business. He attended to his work right up to the handle, and gradually familiarized himself with all the details of the business. As he had an eye to the future, and was ambitious to rise above the level of a mere clerk and assistant to the superintendent, he looked into matters connected with the business that he was not expected to know, and as a result the superintendent soon found him invaluable. His wages were raised, he was called on to assume more responsible duties.

Needless to say that he made good, and toward the end of the season, when the superintendent went to B—— on a call from the main office, Jack was left in full charge of the plant. During the many weeks that had passed since Jack left B—— to assume the duties of his position at Elmdale, he and Amine had corresponded with unfailing regularity. She still lived at the house with the red carpets, hangings and lights, notwithstanding that it was more than twice too large for the needs of herself and the housekeeper, for the gentleman who had been appointed as trustee

for the estate found it necessary to retain the house until all the outstanding loans had been collected as they were due. Amine yearned to see Jack, and often asked him why couldn't he get a few days' leave and come and visit her. Jack, who was just as anxious to see her, could only reply that this was the company's busy season, and he was obliged to remain on the ground.

Although several months had now passed since the murder of Peter Von Strom, no headway was made in apprehending his assassin. The detectives failed to locate the owner of the ruby ring, and had been called off the job and put on other cases. While Jack's breezy ways and great good nature had made many friends for him among the rank and file of the company's employees, as well as higher up, his success in getting ahead had also made enemies for him among those over whose heads he had passed in so short a time. There were three young fellows employed in various capacities about the plant who were greatly disgruntled by his success. These were Henry Almar, Abe Meadows and Phil Taylor. They showed their resentment by refusing to notice him except when business matters compelled them to. They formed a clique and endeavored to make things as unpleasant as possible for the new employee. Jack, however, didn't care a rap for their ill will. He felt abundantly able to take care of himself. The climax came when the superintendent appointed Jack to fill his shoes during his absence in B——. Henry Almar heard the news first and lost no time in communicating the fact to his two cronies.

"Well, if that wouldn't jar you!" growled Abe Meadows. "The idea of a newcomer like him being made boss over the plant, even if it is only for a week or so! Why wasn't one of us appointed to the place?"

"That's easy," replied Phil Taylor. "We stand no show because Harding is the super's favorite, and he gets all the plums that are going."

"I call it an outrage!" gritted Henry Almar. "I've been working three years in this plant, and I don't see that I'm of any more importance now than when I started in."

"And I have been here two years," said Meadows, "and yet I don't stand one, two, three with Harding. Something ought to be done to bring him down a peg or two."

The other two agreed that something ought to be done to lay Jack out.

"We three ought to be able to think of something," said Taylor.

"Let's put our heads together and see if we can't hit on an idea," said Almar.

"If we could get him into trouble with the company in some way and bring about his discharge, it would be the proper caper," said Meadows.

"I'd give a whole lot to see him bounced, but I don't see how the thing can be brought about," replied Almar. "I'm afraid he's too clever to give us an opening."

"Can't we make one ourselves somehow?" said Taylor.

The three tried to think of some scheme, but were not able to figure one out.

"I'll tell you who'll fix him," said Meadows of a sudden, as if an idea had just occurred to him.

"Who?" asked the others in the same breath.

"Limerick, foreman of House No. 1."

"How'll he fix him?" asked Almar.

"He's down on Harding like a carload of bricks."

"Is he? Why?" asked Almar, with a look of interest.

"Harding caught him drunk yesterday and gave him a good calling down. That's something that Limerick won't stand for from anybody. He picked up an ice pick and would have brained Harding, who had turned away, only a pal of his named Donohue caught his arm and hustled him out of the back door, with the help of two others."

"It's a pity he didn't lay Harding out. He would have done us a good turn, though he would have had to suffer for it; but that wouldn't have been our funeral," said Almar with a wicked laugh.

"Well, I heard Limerick swear he'd get square with Harding, and he's a fellow who'll keep his word. He's the toughest man employed in the plant, though Donohue and one or two others are not much behind him. I'll wager Limerick will get at Harding somehow, and if he does it will be all day with the super's favorite."

"Then it's to be hoped he'll reach him," said Almar.

"Here comes Harding now. Let's break away or he may suspect we are talking about him," said Taylor.

"What do we care what he suspects?" sneered Almar.

"Well it's the wisest policy not to give him any idea that we are plotting against him, for that would put him on his guard," said Taylor.

"Pooh! How could he guess what we are talking about?"

"You can't tell. He's sharper than a razor. I have sometimes thought he must have eyes in the back of his head."

Thus speaking, Taylor strolled away, and the other two entered the office.

Jack had seen the three in converse long before they had seen him. He watched them for some minutes from a distance, and by some kind of intuition was satisfied he was the subject of their conversation.

He was aware they had no love for him, and he judged they were still more put out by his being put in charge of the plant until the superintendent returned.

His new position afforded him the chance to get an insight into all the details of the business that he had not already mastered, and he made the most of his opportunities.

Had Meadows, Almar and Taylor given the same attention to business as he had done from the start, Jack never could have got ahead of them.

They didn't, however.

All they cared for was to worry through their work and quit as soon as the clock pointed to five.

They never worked a minute overtime if they could help it.

Their eyes were always on the clock as quitting time came around, so as to make sure that the company didn't get anything the best of them.

The superintendent had sized them up at their true value, and there was very little possibility of any plums, as they called them, coming their way.

After supper, while Jack was figuring on how he could improve his work on the morrow, they were playing pool in a certain saloon where they hung out at nights.

And yet they thought themselves ill used when Harding got to the windward of them.

It was a busy day for all hands, for three schooners and a train of cars had to be loaded with ice, and to accomplish the trick Jack kept all the laborers on the hustle.

The ice was shipped to all interior New England points by rail, to B——, Boston and other ports by water.

Jack passed his orders to the different foremen, and he gave them to understand that he expected them to push things.

Limerick received his instructions sullenly enough, but he obeyed them to the letter, and so the work proceeded to Jack's satisfaction.

Before it was time to knock off the three vessels had their hatches on and were preparing to move down the river.

That evening as Jack was leaving the supper table the boarding missus handed him a note which she said had just been left by a boy.

He opened and read it.

It appeared to be from the night watchman.

At any rate, his name was signed to it.

The note stated that the writer had discovered a serious leakage in Storage House No. 1, and it would be well for the young acting superintendent to come over and investigate it without delay.

Jack, as he walked up to his room to get his hat, wondered how the leakage could have occurred. However, he didn't waste any time figuring over it, but started off towards Storage House No. 1.

It was dark by this time, and the cloudy sky made the night more gloomy than usual.

The wind blew in fitful gusts from the northeast, and the trees he passed bowed to him as if they knew him and wanted to excel one another in politeness.

The road to the ice houses was a lonesome one at that hour, when no one but the watchman was supposed to be in the neighborhood.

House No. 1 was at the farthest and most lonesome end of the row.

With never a light about them, the houses looked like ghostly shadows hovering close to the river's brink, as though meditating a plunge into the dark waters of the swiftly flowing stream.

House No. 1, which was the smaller of the bunch, stood on a gentle elevation, and was reached from the town by a sweeping country road.

Jack had got within a hundred yards of it when suddenly two brawny men dashed out of a patch of shrubbery, and the foremost felled the boy to the ground with a blow from his sledgehammer fist.

CHAPTER VI—A Fiendish Revenge which Failed.

Jack was taken completely by surprise, and had not the ghost of a chance to defend himself against the rascals who assaulted him.

He had been completely knocked out by the blow and, lay quite motionless in the road.

"We've got him dead to rights now," said the ruffian who had struck him, and who was none other than Limerick, the foreman of Ice House No. 1.

"He bit at the note in great shape," chuckled

the other, who was a laborer named Donohue, and a pal of Limerick's.

"He'll never give me no more of his blamed jaw, for this night will finish his connection with the ice company," gritted Limerick.

"It's likely to finish him altogether, I'm thinkin', if you intend carryin' out your plan," replied Donohue.

"Do yer s'pose I do things by halves? What did we bring the mare along for if we didn't intend to use her?"

"Then we'd better lose no time a doin' it. The watchman is down at Number Four, and we want to get through before he comes this way."

"Then whistle for Jerry and Pat to fetch up the mare."

Donohue gave a peculiar whistle. In a few moments out of another clump of bushes farther up the road emerged two men, leading a stout horse.

One of the newcomers carried a lantern, while his companion held a short whip in his hand.

When they came up with the animal the man with the lantern flung a coil of rope on the ground, one end of which was attached to the horse's bellyband.

"Give me the lantern, Jerry," said Limerick, "and lead the mare for'ard a bit."

Jerry obeyed and halted the animal half a dozen feet ahead.

"Now, then, Donohue, do you tie the young blatherskite so he won't get loose in a hurry," said Limerick.

Donohue got down on his knees and proceeded to wind the rope securely around the boy's body, but neglecting to include his arms.

Whether this was an oversight on his part or purposely done, Limerick, who was looking on, made no remark in reference to it.

While Donohue was thus engaged, the animal grew restive, and Jerry, who had hold of her by the bridle, had some difficulty in preventing her from bounding away.

"The mare is in foine fettle to-night. It's a gallus ride she'll be after givin' him," chuckled Limerick as he held the lantern so that Donohue could see to fasten the rope around the body of the half-dazed boy.

Donohue grinned, but said nothing.

As he bent over to knot the end of the rope, Jack, who had come to and realized what was going on, suddenly put up his hands and grabbed him by the throat, fully resolved to sell his life dearly.

In the tussle that ensued the active boy upset the rascal and rolled on top of him.

"Help me, Limerick!" gasped Donohue, making a desperate effort to pull the boy's fingers from his bull neck. With an imprecation Limerick put down the lantern and reached for Jack.

At that moment the mare took fright at the scrap going on behind her and made a sudden bound forward. Jerry lost his hold on the bridle, and the animal dashed down the road dragging Jack, mounted on top of Donohue, after her.

The boy dug his knees into the frightened and gasping ruffian's sides as his human sled shot forward at a rapid pace.

Fate was meting out justice to Donohue, for the rascal was catching what had been intended for Jack, and worse, for he had to carry the weight

of his victim on his chest. Jack released the villain's throat in order to get a more secure hold on his jacket, for he believed that his life depended on maintaining his position.

The boy had no time to feel sorry for the breathless ruffian who had fallen into the pit he had dug for another. The mare was dragging them along down the road at a whirlwind pace, and it was not at all certain that both would not be involved in the same destruction.

The wild career of the mare attracted the notice of the night watchman, who had started to walk up the road.

He took off his hat and pranced about in an effort to stop her. She shied in toward the hedge, throwing Donohue and Jack with considerable force against a small tree, which held them and stopped the animal.

The watchman took advantage of the fact to grasp the mare by the bridle.

She struggled to get away from him, but he was a stout man and held on to her.

He managed to quiet her down by degrees.

The shock of contact with the tree had broken Donohue's shoulder blade and bereft him of his few remaining senses.

Jack was badly shaken up and bruised, but not otherwise injured. Seeing through the gloom that somebody had hold of the animal, he let go of the senseless ruffian, and seizing the slackened rope, rapidly unwound it from his body.

In a few minutes he stood up, free but badly demoralized. He limped forward to see who the person was who had assisted unconsciously in his rescue, and found it was the watchman.

"Hello, O'Hara! So it was you who stopped the horse?" he said.

"Yes, sir," replied the man, dimly recognizing Jack in the gloom.

"Then I owe you my gratitude, for it is likely that you saved my life."

"How is that?" asked the watchman in surprise.

Jack told him how he had been assaulted and captured by Dan Limerick, foreman of Ice House No. 1, assisted by Mike Donohue, his pal, and of the fate they had designed for him.

Then he told of the short but wild ride he had had down the road astride of Donohue.

"He's lying behind that tree, dead, maybe, for all I know," concluded Jack; "but he hasn't got any more than he deserved. By grabbing him at the critical moment I doubtless saved myself from death or terrible injury." The watchman was greatly astonished at the boy's recital.

"Why should they treat you the way they did?" he asked. "What have they against you?"

"I'm sure I couldn't tell you. Limerick might have been sore on me for the calling down I gave him for being drunk yesterday, but surely that's no reason why he should try to kill me. As for Donohue, or the others, whom I didn't recognize, I have given them no cause to go for me in the way they did."

"Limerick has a hard reputation. He killed a man before you came here by letting a block of ice fall on him. He swore it was an accident, and Donohue backed him up. As he had a row a short time before with the dead man, there was a strong suspicion that he had deliberately let the ice down on him. He was arrested, but got off at the ex-

amination in the police court, as the evidence was not strong enough to hold him."

"Well, his days are numbered as an employee of this company after to-night's work, and I shall have him arrested for murderous assault," said Jack. "As for Donohue—he's a candidate for the hospital or the morgue. In any case, he won't work here any more. If I can find out who the other two are, I'll have them in jail along with Limerick."

"How came you to be out here to-night?" asked the watchman.

"I received a note from you at my boarding-house just after supper, stating that there was a serious leak in Storage House No. 1, and asking me to investigate it at once."

"A note from me? I sent you no note!" exclaimed the watchman.

"Then it was a fake note sent by those rascals to decoy me into their trap."

"That's what it must have been, for there is no leak in any of the houses to my knowledge."

"Well, we'll tie the horse to the tree and take a look at Donohue. If he isn't dead he must be next door to it."

Jack struck a match and held it down to the laborer's face. It was white and ghastly, and streaked with blood from a cut on his forehead. Although he looked like a corpse, his heart beat so strongly that Jack judged he was not in any immediate danger of croaking.

"We'll have to carry him to the nearest doctor," he said.

"The nearest is Dr. Smith, half a mile away," said the watchman.

"That's a considerable distance. We'd better tie him on the horse. Then I will take him to town, and you can remain on your job. Keep a sharp watch out, and if you see any men slouching around the neighborhood take note of who they are. If you recognize Limerick as one of them you may be sure the others are the chaps who helped him carry out his scheme to do me up, and try to identify them so that they may be arrested. I want to round the whole bunch up."

"All right," replied O'Hara. "I know most of the hands by sight. None of them has any business to be around here at this hour, so if I see any I'll report their names to you."

Donohue was tied to the back of the mare, and then, taking the animal by the bridle, Jack walked off with her. The watchman directed him how to find Dr. Smith's house, and in the course of twenty minutes Jack reached it, and found the doctor in. He told the physician what had happened to Donohue, and in making his explanation had to inform him of the murderous outrage made upon himself. The doctor was naturally surprised. He called his man and they carried the rascal into his office between them. He found that Donohue's shoulder blade was broken, and that he was otherwise terribly bruised. Whether he had received any internal injuries he could not say offhand, but there seemed to be no evidence that he had. The physician fixed up his shoulder, and then tried to bring him to his senses, after telephoning to the Elmdale Hospital to send an ambulance for the man. Jack, after having his cuts attended to, started for the police station to report the occurrence, and start the

ball rolling for the arrest of Limerick and his two unidentified associates.

CHAPTER VII.—Jack Visits Amine and Gets the Ruby Ring Back.

The Elmdale morning paper had a full account of the affair which the reporter secured from Jack at the station house, and everybody connected with the ice company had heard what the young acting superintendent had been up against the preceding night before they came to work in the morning. Naturally Almar, Meadows and Taylor held a pow-wow over it.

"I told you that Limerick intended to do him," said Meadows.

"You mean he tried to do him," chuckled Almar.

"Something must have worked loose, or he'd have succeeded."

"It must have been Donohue, for he seems to have got it in the neck. According to Harding's story, which is no doubt true, he grabbed Donohue just as the horse started. That saved his life and nearly killed Donohue. Harding seems to have had hog luck. Anybody else would have been killed under the same circumstances."

"He's lucky all around, for he's gone right to the front since he came here, while we, who have had more experience than he, are left in the shade," said Taylor.

"Well, it's too bad that Limerick failed," said Almar. "If Harding had been obliged to go to the hospital we'd have been rid of him for a while, at any rate, and that would have been some satisfaction. As it is, he'll be on the job this morning the same as usual."

"While Limerick won't dare show up any more, and will have to skip out, if he has not already done so, to save himself from going to jail," said Meadows.

"And Donohue will go to jail as soon as he gets out of the hospital," said Taylor; "with the certainty of being convicted and serving a term in the State prison."

The three clerks were clearly disappointed with the outcome of the affair, and Jack's fortunate escape made them a bit shy of trying any games on him at their own risk, for they knew the superintendent wouldn't give them any quarter if they were caught at any crooked business. Jack showed up promptly that morning and received the congratulations of those who liked him and admired his straightforward conduct and close attention to the company's business. He appointed a new foreman, for that individual had taken time by the forelock and skipped out to parts unknown. Jerry and Pat, his associates, came to work as usual, taking the chances that Jack had not given their names to the paper. They felt rather nervous during the forenoon, but when dinner hour came and they had not been interfered with they came to the conclusion they were safe. Nemesis, however, was lying in wait for them. They were the ones who had taken the horse from the company's stable. It happened that a farm boy had seen them do it as he was walking home. He thought nothing about the circumstance until the farmer for whom he worked read the account of the outrage at the

nday meal. The paper said the mare was one that had not been worked for a week, which accounted for her friskiness, and mentioned the fact that she had a white star on her forehead. The boy recalled the fact that the animal he had seen had a white mark on its forehead, and he told the farmer how he had seen two men leading such an animal from the ice company's stable the night previous a short time before the outrage on the young acting superintendent had been committed. The farmer asked him if he thought he would know the men again if he saw them. He said he felt sure that he would. The farmer, taking the boy with him, drove into town after dinner and reported the matter to the police.

Two police officers were detailed to take the boy to the ice company's plant and see if they could secure the two unidentified accomplices of Limerick and Donohue. As soon as Jack learned their errand and had questioned the boy, he took the lad and the officers to Storage House No. 1, and, ordering the foreman to assemble his working gang, asked the witness to look the men over. Without any hesitation he picked out Jerry and Pat as the guilty ones. They were paralyzed, and hotly denied any participation in the affair. They were arrested, however, and locked up, and an officer in plain clothes was sent to investigate their movements the night before. The policeman discovered that they had been out all evening and did not return home till after midnight. As they had both asserted they had been in the house all evening they were caught in a lie, and that told heavily against them. That fact, with the farm boy's evidence, sufficed to hold them for trial. Jerry got the funks bad and offered to turn State's evidence on condition that he would be let down easy, and the prosecuting officer decided to accept him. When the superintendent returned and learned the facts of the case he was indignant that such an outrage should have been worked off on his young assistant.

"The rascals shall be punished to the limit of the law," he said.

He called on the prosecuting officer and asked that the men be brought to speedy trial.

"I will try them as soon as Donohue gets out of the hospital," said the public prosecutor.

In the meantime, as work had slacked up a bit at the plant, Jack obtained permission from the superintendent to run down to B—— for a few days. He posted a letter to Amine, telling her that he was coming to pay her a short visit, and followed himself next day. The girl had got his letter and was expecting him when he rang the bell at the late residence of Peter Von Stroom. She sprang into his arms with an exclamation of joy.

"You don't know how glad I am to see you, Jack," she said.

"You aren't any gladder to see me than I am to see you again, Amine," he said. "I declare you're prettier than ever."

"And you're bigger and handsomer than ever yourself," she declared, laughing and blushing. "Dear me, what a bear you are!" she added, as he gave her another hug, which he supplemented with a kiss.

"Well, let's sit down and have a talk."

"Not till you've had lunch. I prepared it myself, and it's all ready and waiting."

"I never refuse anything good to eat. I shall

be delighted to sample your cooking again, especially as I've been living on boarding-house hash since I left here for Elmdale."

"You poor boy!"

"Oh, I've got fat on it, so I'm not looking for sympathy. The boarding missus sets a pretty good table. At any rate, the house is always full and I haven't heard any kicking."

It was a tasty lunch that the young people sat down to in company with the housekeeper, and Jack did full justice to it, declaring he hadn't enjoyed such a meal since he left B—— for his job at the ice plant. He praised Amine's cooking to the limit, and declared there wasn't her equal in the city. She was greatly pleased at his commendation, and felt that the trouble she had taken for his sake was amply repaid. Jack had not written her about the trouble he had got into with Limerick and his associates for fear she would be worried about him, but now that he was with her he told her the whole story. She was much concerned over his narrow escape, but as he showed no bad effects from his strenuous experience, she had no cause to worry. Jack spent four days with her, and escorted her around to various places of amusement. They had a happy time together, and both regretted that they had to part once more. Jack visited police headquarters and had a talk with the detective to whom he had handed the ring that the murderer of the old money lender had dropped. He learned that the hunt for the assassin had been dropped for some time, and that the police had no expectations that he ever would be discovered.

"Well, if you're done with that ring I wish you'd return it to me. I guess I've got the best right to it next to the owner, and there is small likelihood that he will ever claim it," said Jack.

The detective demurred at first, on the ground that such things belonged to the police department.

"But it seems to be of no use to the police department," persisted the boy. "It's a valuable ring, and I'd like to wear it."

"Will you give me your word that you won't part with it if I let you have it, and that you will return it to me if I should call on you to do so?" asked the detective.

"Yes," replied Jack promptly.

"All right; I'll trust you," said the sleuth.

He got the ring and handed it to Jack.

"I congratulate you on having such a good position as you tell me you have, and that your prospects of advancement are good."

"Thank you. I hope to be superintendent of the plant some day—that is, if merit will get it—or boss of one of my own. There's a lot of money in the ice business if it's worked right, as the different companies that control the product aim to keep the price up. The profit our company makes is more than one hundred per cent. It is almost like finding money, for the ice itself costs practically nothing, the only real expense being that laid out in harvesting it."

"But the plant required for storing it until the time comes for shipping it costs money," said the detective.

"Of course, but once built you have it right along."

"Then there are the freight charges involved in sending it to market. That ought to be quite an item."

"I admit that it is."

"And then there must always be a percentage of loss owing to shrinkage of the ice, at the store-houses, and in transit."

"It is not as much as you may think. No matter what it costs to land a load of ice at the market, the price the company exacts for it is sufficient to always produce a very satisfactory profit."

"I guess you're right," laughed the sleuth, "for the public is always kicking at the cost."

At length Jack's leave of absence expired and he returned to Elmdale. Summer being over, the shipment of ice was largely decreased, and the force of employees at the plant was temporarily reduced. Among those who received notice that their services would be dispensed with was Arthur Almar. He had been attending to his duties in such a slipshod manner of late that the superintendent had got disgusted with him. As he was the oldest employee at the plant, he was furious when the boss told him that he would have to go. He held an indignation meeting with two cronies, and the bunch felt sure that Jack Harding was at the bottom of Almar's dismissal.

"He's down on the three of us," said Almar, "so you chaps can make up your minds that it will only be a question of time when you get your walking papers, too."

"I hate the lobster!" said Abe Meadows vindictively. "I wish something would happen to him."

"Nothing ever happens to fellows of his stamp," replied Almar, "unless it's something that shoves them farther ahead in the world. He has sneaked his way into the super's good graces, and you can gamble on it he'll hold on to his cinch with all his might. He's one of those leeches that never let go of a good thing as long as there is anything in it."

"It's too bad that Limerick didn't finish him that time," said Taylor. "By the way, I wonder where the fellow went?"

"Who—Limerick? How should I know?"

"Donohue and the other two will be tried on Friday, and they'll get at least five years apiece. Limerick was smart enough to escape that by lighting out right away. Jerry Loftus and Pat Magann were fools for not doing the same. Now they are in for it."

The conversation then came back to Jack Harding, and what the trio didn't say about him isn't worth mentioning. It is probable that Jack's ears tingled that night, if there is any truth in the old superstition. The trial of Donohue, and the other two came off on Friday, and the aid furnished by Jerry Loftus helped to convict Donohue and Magann, and they were sentenced to six years each in State prison.

Jerry got three himself, but sentence was suspended in his case, in consideration of his having been used as a witness by the State, and he was allowed to go free, but was required to report once a month to the police. Although it was a satisfaction to Jack that two of his enemies had received their just deserts, he regretted that Limerick, who he felt satisfied was the chief scoundrel, had escaped. Something impressed him with the conviction that he would meet the fellow again, and he knew if he did there would be trouble.

CHAPTER VIII.—Something About the Ice Business.

Jack was eager to learn how the ice company harvested their ice, and one day approached the superintendent on the subject. That gentleman appreciated his assistant's desire to obtain all the knowledge he could of the business in which he was engaged, and gave him a general insight into the methods employed. He also promised to send him out when the ice-cutting gangs got to work, so that he would obtain a practical insight into the harvesting part of the business.

When cold weather set in and river navigation got difficult and finally closed up altogether, ice was shipped altogether by cars. On the Saturday before Thanksgiving Jack paid another visit to B——, and stayed eight days with Amine, much to her delight.

They had a splendid time together, and when he left he promised to spend Christmas week with her. On his return the superintendent sent him up the river to where a gang of men was employed on the ice field. He found the men had long chisel-shaped bars, with which they were cutting holes in the ice, about five paces apart, all over that part of the river, which was now frozen hard enough for skating purposes. Jack knew it was too early yet to harvest ice, and he wondered what the men were doing, for the superintendent had not explained this part of the business to him.

He asked the foreman in charge of the work what it was done for.

"Well," was the reply, "you see this coating of snow prevents the ice from forming fast enough. Snow is warm, as I suppose you know. A sheep covered up in a drift will live through a night that would freeze her to death if she were exposed to the weather. Just so, a heavy fall of snow is the best thing in the world to keep strawberries and other plants from winter killing. It keeps the river warm in the same way. Ice will form, to be sure, under the snow, but so slow that we shouldn't get more'n half a crop if we didn't cut those holes and let the water through."

"I see," replied Jack. "The weight of the snow makes the ice sink a little; that forces the water up, and the water soaks the snow, and then freezes and makes ice."

"Yes, but that top ice—snow ice, we call it—is good for nothing. It's only a bother to us, as you will see if you are here when we are cutting. But it doesn't prevent the ice from forming underneath as the snow does."

"I understand. The ice is a good conductor of caloric, and the snow isn't," said Jack, who had learned enough of natural philosophy in the public school to come to this conclusion. "But you have horse scrapers to scrape the snow off."

"Sure, we have; but the ice isn't strong enough here to bear a horse at present. As it's growing colder every day, and the ice is getting thicker by degrees, we'll soon have our scrapers at work."

Jack was much interested in the work, and, thanks to the superintendent's friendship, he had nothing to do that day but watch the work, and he stored the knowledge up for future reference.

About ten days later he accompanied a gang of men with horses and plank scrapers six feet broad. The ice was firm enough now to bear up

horses, and so the workmen began scraping the snow up, like hay, in big windows stretching across the river. A week later a heavy snow-storm, accompanied by sleet, and followed by hail, swept that part of the country. When the storm was over the river was covered with a coarse frozen crust, too hard for the wooden scrapers. This brought out the iron-edged scoop scrapers, formed for removing either heavy or crusted snow. Each scraper was drawn by a horse, with a harness which consisted of a simple girth and loops for the shafts.

Jack was now almost wholly employed in the office along with Abe Meadows and Phil Taylor. A part of his business was to see that the owners of the land along the river and the big creeks got their checks for the privilege bought by the company of cutting the ice within the radius of their property rights.

Having access to this information Jack was able to inform himself as to the amounts the company paid for the privilege to the different persons along the route operated by the ice company. Meadows and Taylor, finding that they gained nothing by being at outs with the superintendent's assistant, gradually assumed a friendly attitude toward him, which they probably would not have done had Henry Almar remained on the job. Almar had hated Jack more than the others, and had been the active cause of putting the other two against the newcomer. As Jack was not a boy to hold feelings against any one, he was rather pleased than otherwise to be on social terms with his office mates. They failed, however, to get him to spend his evenings at the billiard room they frequented, as Jack believed in employing his time to more advantage. He was ambitious, and in consequence always looking ahead. The dream of life now was to get into the ice business as an owner. He was gathering all the knowledge and experience he could get hold of to that end, but he foresaw that without money he could accomplish very little. This was all the more important, as his brain grasped the ice business from a wide point of view. He did not propose to go into it with only limited facilities, and thus be handicapped by circumstances, and unable to compete with the big concerns. His ultimate ambition was to become a power in the ice business. He dreamed of the time when through his sagacity he would come into control of the entire product of the State of Maine, and so be able to fix prices and build up a big fortune.

In a word, he wanted to become an ice king. After spending Christmas week with Amine, Jack returned to Elmdale to find that preparations were getting under way to harvest the ice farther up the river, where it was reported to be between sixteen and eighteen inches thick. The superintendent, after coaching him, sent him to look after the work. The company expected to cut over 100,000 tons of ice that year, and had built two new ice houses up at the new ice field to store its product. Jack found that he had a small army of men to keep track of—300 in fact—and the superintendent told him that he expected them to cut 6,000 tons a day, and store it in the houses. The responsibility of turning out that amount of frozen water, therefore, devolved on our hero.

He was well fitted for the task, for he knew how

to get the most out of a man and without acting the part of a slave-driver, either. Operations were begun with a piece of board and a curious-looking instrument. One of the men got down on his face and took sight across the board at a target, set up in one of the windows of snow, while several others drew the instrument along the edge of it. They thus marked the ice somewhat like a schoolboy draws a straight line with a pencil and ruler. That was called striking a straight line. Next the men proceeded to strike another at right angles with the first one. To do this accurately the "straight-edge" board is equipped with an arm, which, when open, lies on the ice like a carpenter's square. The instrument used to mark with was called a handgroove, and had seven steel teeth, set one behind another. The first tooth cuts the slightest groove in the ice; the second a trifle longer and deeper; the third deeper still, and so on, till the last leaves a groove an inch and one-half deep.

Thus the men laid out square-cornered fields down the river, which were to be subsequently cut up into large cakes for transportation. The cutting process is an interesting one to a person who, like Jack on this occasion, sees it for the first time, but we haven't space to describe it. It is enough to say that the ice is not cut through at once by the machine that follows the "marker." A four-inch cutter was first used, then a six-inch one, which was succeeded by others each cutting two inches deeper, which is as much as a horse should be compelled to draw. The ice was cut in this way about two-thirds of its thickness. As the morning advanced Jack put more and more men and machines at work, and the river in that vicinity presented a busy scene. On one side the six, eight and ten-inch cutters were going; on the other men were breaking off broad rafts of the grooved ice and floating them along a canal which had been cut to the two new ice houses.

Some men were cutting through to the water with saws. Others were splitting off the sheets, the ends of which had been thus cut, with iron bars. And others still were calking with ice chips the ends of the grooves which were to come in contact with the water. The calking was to keep the water from running into the grooves, for if it gets into them it will circulate through them, then freeze, and the ice will be a solid mass again, as if it hadn't been grooved at all. A sheet of ice consisted of three hundred and sixty cakes. One man sufficed to ferry it up the canal to the ice houses, where it was broken up into blocks of six cakes each. Each of these blocks was fastened upon by an iron grapple, and taken by two men and a horse up an inclined plane to the summit of a strong staging built before the windows of the ice houses. It was lively work, one horse going up after another at a swift pace.

At the summit of the staging the blocks were seized by men with ice-hooks, and shoved along toward the windows, where other men caught and whirled them into the house, where, layer upon layer, they were stowed away. Jack had to be here, there and everywhere to see that things were kept moving, since it was no fool job to harvest 6,000 tons in a day, and he was required to see that it was done. Had Meadows or Taylor been intrusted with the responsibility they never could have made good, for they were not built like Jack. Henry Almar had been put on it the previous

year, with a thousand tons a day less to handle, and he had fallen down, and the superintendent had to look after it himself. As he was a very busy man, he took a chance on Jack this year, for he had sized the boy up as a hustler, and he had no cause to regret it.

CHAPTER IX.—The New Superintendent.

The superintendent was so pleased with Jack's work that he kept him in charge of the entire harvest of the company that year, and the boy didn't return to his office duties until all the ice houses were filled to overflowing. By this time Jack had the ice business down pretty fine, and could have filled the shoes of the superintendent, with satisfaction to the company, at short notice. The shipping season came around again, and then Jack realized that he had been a whole year with the ice company. He was getting a very satisfactory salary now. He had not squared up with Ezra Norton, as he intended to do, because the lawyer had refused to tell him what he considered due him, consequently he had a nice little account at the Elmdale Savings Bank. He visited Amine once since Christmas and spent a couple of days with her. She was now going on seventeen, and fast developing into a very beautiful young woman. Jack began to fear that he would soon have one or more rivals to contend with, but she assured him there wasn't the least danger of such a thing. She didn't go out in society, and therefore her chances of meeting with young men were limited. At any rate, she told Jack that she never would love any one but him, and she hoped he would remain equally true to her.

"Well, you can bet your life I will," he replied, with an emphasis that satisfied her that he meant it. "There isn't another girl like you in the world. Amine, and I thank my stars every day of my life that I have won your love."

"And I think there is not another boy like you in the world, either," she replied with a smile.

What could he do after that but grab her in his arms and give her half a dozen kisses? Amine told him that her trustee and guardian valued her estate at much more than the \$50,000 Jack had roughly estimated it at.

"The treasures of my grandfather have alone been appraised at \$25,000," she said. "The house, which I thought he rented, turned out to be his own property, and is worth about \$15,000, without the furnishings. He had \$35,000 in bank when he was killed, and he had \$15,000 loaned out, most of which is now collected. So you see I'm worth nearly \$100,000," she concluded.

"And I'm worth only about \$250," said Jack. "I'm afraid your guardian and trustee would not seriously consider me as a suitor for your hand if he knew about it."

"Don't you worry about that, Jack, dear. When I marry I shall suit myself and not my trustee, who will have nothing to say about what I shall or shall not do after I'm eighteen. At any rate, I mean to marry only you, unless you should find some other girl that you like better."

"Not much danger of that; but, still, I don't intend to marry you until I can support you in the style to which your money entitles you to look for."

"Now, Jack, we won't talk about my money any more. By the way, there is one thing that I want to tell you. Among grandfather's papers the trustee found an application for a loan signed by a man named Charles Torrens. It was endorsed by grandfather as granted on a date about six months before he died, and the loan, which was for \$5,000, was entered in his books in due form. The loan had just six months to run, and was secured by an endorsed note. Now that note was not found in the safe where he kept such things."

"Then the man must have taken it up," said Jack.

"There is no evidence in my grandfather's books showing that Mr. Torrens paid the note, and he was very exact in his bookkeeping. A memorandum was found showing that he expected Mr. Torrens to call on the evening he was murdered, and I have often asked myself if the man I let in, and whom you afterward saw leave the house in a hurry immediately after the crime was committed, was Charles Torrens, and whether he did not kill grandfather to get possession of his note, which he was unable to meet, perhaps."

"My gracious! It might be so," exclaimed Jack.

"What were the initials inside the ring that the murderer dropped and you found?"

"I can tell you without taking the ring from my finger. It reads: 'From M. C. to C. T.,'" replied Jack.

"'From M. C. to C. T.,'" repeated Amine. "C. T. are the initials of Charles Torrens. Might not the ring be his?"

"By George! That's so," exclaimed Jack, a bit excitedly. "It looks to me as if the Charles Torrens in question was the murderer of your grandfather."

"It would seem so. There is evidence that my grandfather expected him to call that evening and take up his note. The only person who did call on grandfather was the man who killed him. If he was not Charles Torrens who was he? The disappearance of the note without any evidence to show that it had been paid looks as if the visitor was Torrens, who, after killing grandfather, took possession of the note, which my grandfather probably took out of his safe in expectation of Torrens' appearance with the money to take it up, and then left the house in the hurried way you witnessed."

"Everything points to Charles Torrens as the murderer. At least that is my opinion," said Jack. "Have you called the attention of the police to the facts?"

"No. I spoke to my trustee about it, and he said he would have a talk with the detective who originally had charge of the case."

"What was the result?"

"I haven't heard."

"Well, I'll go and see the detective myself right away. I think the matter is too important to be neglected."

Jack put on his hat and went to police headquarters. He inquired for the sleuth who had returned the ring to him, and learned that he was out of town on business. Then he asked to see the chief, and was told that he was in Boston, but was expected back next day. As Jack had to leave for Elmdale next morning there was no chance of him seeing the official, so he wrote a note to the detective and left it to be delivered to him when he got back. Then he returned to the house and told

Amine that his visit to police headquarters had been without result. They talked the matter over for a while, and then branched off on their own private affairs.

In his first letter to Amine after his return to Elmdale Jack asked her if the detective had called on her in reference to the suspicions they had formed about Charles Torrens' possible connection with her grandfather's murder. He eagerly waited her reply. Before it came an unexpected change occurred at the ice plant. The superintendent who had been so friendly with Jack was called to B——, and on the following day the boy, who had been left in charge of the plant, received a telegram from him which stated that he would not return, and that a new superintendent would be down to Elmdale in a day or two to take his place. Jack was very sorry to hear this news. The late superintendent had been a very good friend of his, and he hated to part from him. However, there was no help for it, so he hoped that his new boss would turn out to be an agreeable successor. On the following day the new superintendent appeared. He was a dark, saturnine-looking man of about thirty-five years, with a peculiar expression in his eyes, and apparently of a nervous temperament. On presenting himself at the office he asked for Jack Harding.

"Harding is outside somewhere," said Abe Meadows, who had no idea who the visitor was.

"Then hunt him up," replied the man sharply. "Where is the superintendent's private office?"

"We have no superintendent at present, but we expect a new one to arrive soon," replied Meadows.

"I am the new superintendent," said the caller in a tone that impressed the clerk with the truth of the assertion, and he immediately became very polite to the new boss.

"I will find Harding for you right away, sir. That door yonder leads into the superintendent's private room," and then Meadows hurried out to find Jack and tell him that the new super had arrived and wanted to see him.

He found Jack at Storage House No. 1.

"Our new boss has turned up and is at the office waiting for you," he said.

"That so?" replied Jack. "What sort of a looking man is he?"

"I don't fancy him. He's a queer-looking guy," replied Meadows as they started for the office. "He's got a smooth face and looks something like an actor. I'm afraid he's a Tartar, for he has an eye like a gimlet, and it isn't a pleasant one, either. His complexion is almost as dark as a Mexican, and I don't like the expression of his face. I'm thinking you won't find him anywhere near as friendly as our late super."

The description of the new boss, as given by Meadows, was not reassuring to Jack. However, he intended to make himself as useful to the new superintendent as he had to the old one, and he trusted that his efforts would be appreciated.

"What is his name?"

"He didn't tell me his name," answered Meadows. "He was sharp and sweet with me, as if I amounted to nothing. I reckon I sha'n't like him."

They entered the office. Jack looked around, but did not see the stranger.

"Where is the new superintendent?" he asked.

"In his private office, I guess," said Meadows. Jack crossed the office and entered the room.

There, seated in the pivot chair, was the newcomer, nervously drumming on the open desk. His back was toward the boy, and the moment Jack's eyes lighted on his figure it struck him that he had seen the man before somewhere. At the sound of Jack's entrance he swung around in the chair and looked at the boy sharply. Jack admitted to himself that Abe Meadow's description had been good, and he was not favorably impressed with the new boss.

"Are you Jack Harding?" asked the newcomer in an aggressive tone.

"I am, sir. I believe you are the new——"

"Superintendent?" interrupted the man, with an unpleasant smile. "Exactly. Here is a letter from the general manager of the company confirming the fact. I will introduce myself. My name is Charles Torrens."

"Charles Torrens!" almost gasped Jack, pausing as he was about to open the letter, and staring at the new superintendent in so marked a way as to attract the man's notice.

"That's what I said," he replied sharply. "What makes you stare so at me?"

"I beg your pardon," fluttered Jack. "I will read——"

He was about to say "the letter" when the new boss caught sight of the ruby ring on his finger. He turned white in a moment and interrupted the boy with a fierce imprecation. It was the same imprecation, and uttered in the same tone, as Jack had heard from the unknown man that fatal night on the stoop of the red house, as Peter Von Stroom's residence was called by his neighbors, and like a flash the foggy scene with the muffled-up stranger, the assassin of the old money lender, passed across the boy's mental vision. He looked quickly at the new superintendent's ghastly countenance and saw the baleful glare the man bent upon him, like that of a tiger at bay. Instinctively it struck him that he was face to face with the murderer of Amine's grandfather.

CHAPTER X.—Attacked in the Dark.

The new superintendent seemed to recognize Jack as the boy he had encountered on the doorstep of the red house, for he was indeed the man who had killed Peter Von Stroom that eventful night. For a moment or two the pair looked at each other in silence, uncertain what course to pursue under the strained situation. At length Torrens pulled himself together with a short, unpleasant laugh.

"Well," he said, "why don't you read the letter?"

Jack mechanically opened the envelope, which was not sealed, took out the enclosure and read the letter, which bore the printed heading of the ice company. It was addressed to "Jack Harding, Elmsdale," and in a few typewritten sentences introduced the bearer, Charles Torrens, as the successor of William Prebble, the late superintendent. It was signed by the general manager of the company. By the time Jack had finished its perusal he had recovered his self-possession.

"Shall I introduce you to the office help and show you over the plant, Mr. Torrens?" he said, as he folded the note up and put it in his pocket.

"Yes," replied the newcomer.

"Follow me, then," said Jack.

As they passed through the office he introduced Meadows and Taylor to the new superintendent, and then took him outside. An hour later Torrens was back in his private room, and Jack was on his way to his boarding-house to dinner.

"Curse the luck!" muttered Torrens, glaring out of the window at the river. "That's the boy I encountered on the stoop of Von Stroom's house. What was he doing there on that occasion? He seemed to be looking for the bell, which would indicate that he had never been there before, consequently he was not a friend of the old money lender. He must have brought a message from somebody who had dealings with Von Stroom. Judging from his actions and the way he stared at me in this room, I'm afraid he recognized me. Yet how could he in the fog and the way I was muffled up? His statement wouldn't count for much before a jury, but unfortunately he found my ring and is wearing it. That would be a damaging piece of corroborative evidence against me, as my initials are on the inside of the band. I suppose he recognized its value and didn't turn it over to the police on that account. I must get it away from him somehow. I am not safe while he has it in his possession. It was a desperate game I played that night, and I figured I had got away with it. I must make friends with this boy, so as to throw him off his guard, and delay any action on his part that may make trouble for me while I consider what is to be done to insure my safety."

When the new superintendent met Jack that afternoon he was very suave toward him, but there was a look in his eye that warned the boy to put no trust in his friendly attitude. That evening Jack wrote a long letter to Amine, telling her that the man they both suspected as the murderer of her grandfather, namely, Charles Torrens, had been appointed superintendent of the ice storage plant, and was already on the ground. He detailed the peculiar circumstances of his first interview with Torrens, which, he said, satisfied him almost beyond a doubt that Torrens was the guilty man.

He also wrote a letter to the detective in which he gave all his reasons for believing that Charles Torrens, the new superintendent, was the murderer of Peter Von Stroom. He posted both letters in the postoffice and then returned to his boarding-house and went to bed. Torrens spent the evening in his room at a small hotel in the town. Feeling that he was menaced by exposure and arrest as a murderer, he paced his apartment with a lowering brow, and cudgelled his brain for some plan that would save him. Finally he left the room and went down to the bar for a drink. It took several whiskies to steady his nerves, and then he walked out on the street. The night air cleared his brain some, and he was better able to think. Standing near the postoffice, he saw Jack approach and enter the building. Watching him, he saw him post his two letters, and he suspected at once that the boy had written to B—— in relation to himself. That made him feel desperate.

"I have no time to lose," he muttered. "I must take action to-night, for if he has notified the police of his suspicions concerning me—for I am certain he does suspect me—a detective will be down here by to-morrow night. Yes, something must be done to-night at all hazards."

He determined to follow Jack and see where he lived, so he shadowed the boy to his boarding-house. There was a common saloon across the street, and Torrens went in there, and called for a whisky. When he came out on the street again he took particular note of Jack's abiding place, as well as the neighborhood, and then walked back toward his hotel. He went into the bar again and passed an hour thinking and consuming two or three more whiskies. The liquor heated his brain, and made him feel equal to another desperate deed if necessary.

"I'd be safe if he were out of my way altogether," he muttered to himself. "Since I am already a murderer, another crime under the circumstances can make but little difference. If I've got to hang it might as well be for a sheep as for a lamb. That boy's death may make all the difference in the world to me. Dead boys tell no tales. If he lives he may babble information that would land me behind the bars. At any rate, I must get the ring, and if I have to kill him to get it, so be it. It was his misfortune to get hold of it."

It was now close on to midnight, and the bar was about to close for the night, so he took another whisky, bought a pint flask of it, and went to his room. He had already taken enough liquor to make most men more or less drunk, but it seemed to have no such effect on him. It only seemed to nerve him to the commission of another crime. His room window faced upon a veranda, and he saw he would have no trouble in reaching the ground. He felt it would not do for him, a stranger, to attempt to leave the hotel at two o'clock in the morning, for that was now the hour. It might lead to unpleasant suspicions, especially in view of what might happen if he was able to carry out his plans. While standing in front of the saloon that faced Jack's boarding-house, just after he followed the boy to his roost, he had noticed the light flare up in a certain window, and saw Jack in the room, so he concluded that Jack occupied that apartment, which was on the third floor front.

The question now was how could he reach that room without attracting attention. It would first be necessary to get into the house. That was a problem that taxed his ingenuity. Had he been an expert crook the task would have presented no great difficulty. A skeleton key or a jimmy would have done the business in a jiffy. He had neither, nor had he had any practice in their use. A man less resolved in the purpose he had in his mind would have given the venture up as too difficult for accomplishment. Torrens determined to trust to luck and cautiously made his exit from the hotel by way of the balcony. He didn't see a soul on the street as he made his way toward Jack's boarding-house. Standing on the opposite side of the way, in front of the closed saloon, he saw a man come staggering along. The fellow was very drunk, and Torrens watched him to see where he was bound. He stopped in front of the boarding-house and began to fumble for his key.

In a moment a bright idea struck the new superintendent. He crossed over just as the man got the key in the lock and opened the door. Giving the fellow a push that sent him down on his hands and knees, he got by him and ran up the dark stairway. He went on up to the third floor and stopped in front of the door of the room he

believed was occupied by his intended victim. Luck had certainly befriended him so far, but the obstacle presented by the locked door was yet to be overcome. He heard the staggering steps of the drunken man on the stairs coming up. He was even drunker than before, for the shock he had sustained had sent all the fumes of the liquor to his head. The fellow passed the first landing and came up the second flight. He was talking to himself in a growling tone and making quite a bit of noise. When he reached the landing on which Torrens stood he came toward the superintendent, feeling his way along the wall.

He stopped close to Torrens, and it then appeared that his room was next to Jack's. As he swayed to and fro he suddenly lost his balance and fell with a crash against the door of Jack's room. He made noise enough to awaken the dead. At any rate, the racket awoke the boy from a sound sleep. He listened and heard the drunken man pawing at his door and trying to get on his legs. Wondering what the trouble was, he got up, struck a match, and, opening the door, peered out into the corridor. He recognized his next-door neighbor on his hands and knees, and then he saw the dark figure of the intruder in the background. He supposed it was one of the boarders who had come in with the tipsy man, and as the match expired in his fingers he said:

"Here, give me a hand with Johnson and we'll get him into his room."

Torrens stepped forward, but not with the intention of lending a hand. As Jack seized Johnson by the left arm the new superintendent seized him by the throat and forced him back into his room, kicking the door shut. The boy realized at once that something was wrong, and he tried to call for help, but the only sound he could utter was a choking gurgle. Torrens forced him back on the bed, and a desperate struggle ensued between them, for Jack felt he was fighting for his life.

CHAPTER XI.—In the Clutches of the Law at Last.

The room was dark, save for the faint light that designated the window, but a myriad of lurid sparks flashed before the choking boy's eyes as the villain's grip tightened on his throat. In his efforts to get free Jack accidentally gave his assailant a heavy kick on the shins. The spot he hit was a tender one, for Torrens had been injured there a few days before. The pain was so intense for the moment that the rascal uttered a groan and partially released his hold on the boy's throat. Jack took advantage of the fact to tear his hands free and shove him back. Torrens tried to recover his advantage, but failed. Jack, who was a strong boy, grasped him around the body and swung him over on the bed. Torrens now found himself placed on the defensive, and realizing that his ruin was certain if the boy got the upper hand of him, he made a furious fight of it.

For some minutes Jack had all he could do to hold his antagonist, but, believing him to be a thief, he was determined to capture him. The struggle was making a good deal of noise, and two of the boarders, who had been aroused by the tipsy man's tumble, came out into the landing to investigate the cause of the continued racket.

They found Johnson fumbling at his door, but that didn't account for the noise in Jack's room. One of them turned the handle of Jack's door and looked inside. He saw right away that something unusual was going on in there, apparently a scrap in the dark.

"Get some matches, Lewes," he said to the other boarder. "There's trouble in here. Hurry!"

Lewes brought the matches in short order, and the flash of the first one showed Jack Harding struggling with a stranger. The matchlight did more than that. It illuminated Torrens' countenance, and Jack, with an exclamation of surprise, recognized the new superintendent.

"Mr. Torrens!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, and I suppose the game is up!" cried the villain.

As Lewes lighted the gas Jack let go of Torrens.

"What are you doing here in this house, and in my room, and why did you attack me so viciously?" demanded the boy.

"That's my business," glared Torrens.

"It's mine, too, and I can guess the reason. Perhaps you intended to kill me like you did poor old Peter Von Stroom, because you thought I recognized you as the man I met on the stoop of his house immediately after the murder was committed."

"You infernal imp, I will kill you!" cried the villain, suddenly drawing a revolver.

Jack reached for his arm with the instinct of self-preservation. There was a flash and a stunning report. The ball whizzed past the boy and hit the second boarder who stood behind him. The man fell with a groan. A fearful struggle then took place between Jack and Torrens for possession of the weapon. Lewes jumped in and turned the scales against the rascal, who was disarmed and held by them. The report of the revolver not only alarmed the house, but it brought a policeman who happened to be passing at the moment. He found the door unlocked downstairs and came up in a hurry. The first thing he saw was the boarder lying unconscious and bleeding across the doorway of Jack's room, and then he saw a desperate-looking person struggling in the grasp of Jack and Lewes. He didn't ask who had fired the shot, for it seemed plain who the man was. He pulled out his handcuffs and shackled Torrens in a twinkling, as several other boarders came upon the scene. Of course the shooting had put the house in an uproar. The landlady was aroused, and almost had a fit, thinking at first that the building was on fire. A call was sent to the hospital for an ambulance, but before it arrived the policeman marched his prisoner to the station house, where he was locked up on the charge of murderous assault. Jack held an impromptu levee in his room, but he said as little as possible about the man who had created all the disturbance. The morning paper had an account of the affair. Abe Meadows and Phil Taylor were astonished when they read it. They could not believe that it really was the new superintendent who had attacked Jack Harding in his room and shot the boarder. They lay in wait for Jack as he came to work.

"Say, Harding, who was the man who was arrested last night at your boarding-house?" asked Meadows. "The name given in the paper was

the same as that of our new superintendent; but it couldn't have been him."

"It was him, just the same," replied Jack.

"It was? And he is in jail for assaulting you and shooting the boarder?"

"He is."

"Great thunder! What was he doing at your boarding-house at that late hour?"

"He came there to do me up."

"Do you up! What for?"

"Because he wanted to get me out of the way."

"Why did he want to get you out of the way?"

"For the reason that I recognized him as the murderer of an old money lender named Peter Von Stroom, whom he killed last spring in B——"

The two clerks gasped.

"Tell us about it, Harding," they said eagerly.

Jack told them about the murder of Amine's grandfather, and showed them the ring that the assassin dropped at his feet when he fled from the house.

"The new super is a pretty slick individual, but he's up Salt Creek now," said Meadows. "The company will have to find another man to take charge."

He and Taylor could talk of nothing else that morning but the surprise their new boss had treated them to. Jack appeared in the police court when Torrens was brought up for examination. He told the story of the previous night's affair, and then explained the cause of it, to the astonishment of the judge and others who were present. Torrens glared at Jack during the proceedings, but had nothing to say. The hospital doctor reported that the lodger was seriously but not fatally wounded, and that he would get well, so Torrens was held simply for his attack on Jack, pending action on the part of the authorities of B——, who were notified that a man, suspected as being the murderer of Peter Von Stroom, was in jail at Elmdale. The detective had hardly more than read Jack's letter when the chief of police at B—— got the telegram from the Elmdale authorities telling him about Charles Torrens, and his presumed connection with the murder of the old money lender. The chief immediately summoned the detective and told him to go to Elmdale by the next train. Jack sent a brief telegram to the manager of the ice company that morning that caused him to make preparations to go to Elmdale by the next train, too. Both he and the detective reached the town about dark.

The manager went to a hotel and sent for Jack, while the detective went to see the Elmdale chief of police. While Jack was telling his story to the manager, the detective was looking for him at his boarding-house. The manager was amazed at the boy's revelations. He remembered the mysterious murder of the old money lender, and was staggered at the idea that Charles Torrens, who was an old employee of the ice company, was practically accused of having committed the crime. He thought there must be some mistake in connecting Torrens with the affair, but could not but admit that things looked bad for the man. Jack assured him that the circumstantial evidence against Torrens was strong enough, in his opinion, to convince a jury of his guilt. While they were talking the matter over the detective was announced, and the manager sent word to him to join them. The detective, after hearing the full

circumstances from Jack said that Torrens was the murderer of Peter Von Stroom. He asked the boy to return him the ring to be used as evidence against the villain when he was brought to B——. The Elmdale authorities waived proceedings against Torrens in order that the detective might take him to B—— to answer the more serious charge now against him. Jack was to go along, as he was the most important witness against him. Next morning the manager visited the ice plant, and held a business interview with Jack on the company's affairs, the result of which was that he appointed the boy to the post of superintendent. That afternoon Jack accompanied the detective and his prisoner to B——, the manager remaining at Elmdale to look after the plant until the boy returned. Next morning Jack appeared in the police court at B—— and testified against Torrens, who was held for trial without bail. After dining with Amine he took the afternoon train back to Elmdale, and at once entered on his duties as the regular superintendent of the ice plant.

CHAPTER XII.—Jack Outlines His Scheme.

The summer passed away and Jack had his hands full attending to the shipping of the larger part of the 100,000 tons of ice harvested during the preceding winter. Abe Meadows and Phil Taylor did better work for him than they had for the old superintendent. The reason was that Jack knew better how to handle them. But a great change was impending in Jack's prospects. When he went to B—— to attend the trial of Charles Torrens for the murder of Amine's grandfather he left Abe Meadows in charge of the plant, and Abe was tickled to death at the honor. Torrens was convicted and sentenced to death, but his lawyer appealed, and that acted as a stay to the execution of the sentence. While in B—— Jack learned that the Rockland Ice Company, which employed him, was in financial difficulties and was negotiating with the Kennebec Ice Company, a business rival, to sell its plant and business at the best figure possible.

Jack saw that this change would probably result in his losing his position. Having ascertained that there was no question about the Rockland Company going out of business, the boy began to consider what he should do with respect to his own future. His sharp brain suggested a scheme. He determined to start in at once and make contracts with all the people up the river who sold ice-cutting privileges to the Rockland Company, their five-year contracts having expired that year. This would not require the investment of any capital at the start, for payments on the ice-cutting privileges were not made until late in the fall. This would checkmate the Kennebec Ice Company after it came into possession of the business. As soon as he secured the river rights he would be in complete control, for a time, at least, of the situation, and he would be in a position to interest capital toward forming a new company, with himself at the head, to carry on the ice business. The plant which the Kennebec Ice Company was on the eve of acquiring at bargain rates would be almost useless unless the company could cut the ice close by in January. The result would be that the new company would have every

chance of buying it in cheap. It was a brilliant idea, and Jack, with visions of becoming a boy ice king, lost no time in putting it into practice.

On his return to Elmdale he took one of the Rockland Company's contracts, inserted his own name in place of the company's name, and had a supply of them printed. Leaving Abe Meadows in charge of the plant, he started to make a round of those people who for years back had sold the privileges of cutting ice to the Rockland Company. He had filled in the rates paid during the preceding five-year lease, which he could easily do, as he had all the information in his office, and inside of a week was so fortunate as to sign every property owner on the river that he needed in order to make sure of a harvest of 100,000 tons of ice. With the documents in his pocket he returned to Elmdale. He spent the whole of the following Sunday at the office, making a complete list of all the customers of the company, with the quantity of ice that each was buying, and the rates they were paying for it. He also made a record from the books of many other things that he wanted to have at his fingers' ends when he started to form the new ice company.

Then he wrote a long letter to Amine telling her that the Rockland Ice Company was going out of business, and he proposed to start a new company to capture the business. He explained his plan in a general way, and he said he'd like to have her persuade her trustee to take \$10,000 worth of the stock for her. Jack said he would meet the gentleman and go over his plans, and present the figures that would show that there was a big thing in it, and that the reason why the Rockland Company had to give up was because its business had been badly managed. Amine wrote back that she would have a talk with her trustee, and not only propose that he take the stock in question, but that he would loan Jack an additional \$10,000 to help him start his company. A week later she wrote again telling him that her trustee would take the matter up with him, but as he was responsible to the court for the uses he put her money to that he would not consider the suggestion unless Jack could furnish undoubted evidence that the investment was a gilt-edged one. If Jack could do this he was ready to invest \$10,000 in the new company himself as well. In the same mail the boy received a letter from the general manager of his company to report at the main office in B—— at once. Leaving the plant in charge of Meadows, he took the afternoon train for that city, arriving about dark and going straight to the red house. He had telegraphed Amine that he was coming, so she was expecting him. After supper he devoted a good part of the evening to talking about the new company he proposed to form. Amine was as enthusiastic about it as he was himself.

"You will surely make a great success of it, Jack," she said, after he had shown her the documents he had brought along. He asked her to put them with the bunch of contracts in the safe until he needed them. He said he intended to call on her trustee next day if he had the time, as he was anxious to set the ball rolling, though he didn't want to make any positive move until his relations with the Rockland Company were severed. Next morning he visited the general manager. He was told that the Rockland Company had sold its plant and business to the Kennebec

Ice Company, the arrangement to take effect in fifteen days, at the end of which time he would be superseded by an appointee of the new owners.

In conclusion the manager complimented Jack on the excellent service he had rendered the company since he became connected with it.

"I have strongly recommended you to the Kennebec people," he said, "and it is possible you may be given a position somewhere in their employ."

"Thank you, Mr. Wills, but I don't care to engage with the Kennebec Company," Jack replied. "I have other views with regard to my future."

"Indeed! Well, whatever they are, I wish you success," answered the manager, and the interview ended.

Jack then returned to the red house for dinner.

Before it was served he asked Amine to call up her trustee on the 'phone, and ask the gentleman if it would be convenient to hold an interview with him that afternoon about the ice business, as it was necessary for him to return that evening to Elmdale. The gentleman, whose name was Hawks, replied that he would be pleased to have Harding call at his office that afternoon at two. Jack made his appearance there promptly on time, with all his documents, and introduced himself.

"Glad to know you, Harding," said Mr. Hawks, shaking hands with the boy in a genial way. "I've heard a good deal about you from Miss Falkland."

Jack opened his handbag and took the papers and contracts from it. He first went all over the ice business, describing how it was operated, from the harvesting time to the shipment of the blocks by rail and by boat. He showed in figures what it cost for the privilege of cutting ice to the extent of 100,000 tons. The cost of labor, a big item, in harvesting that amount of ice. The wages of the regular force employed all the year around. The cost of maintaining storage houses enough to hold at least 100,000 tons, together with all other expenses, as compiled from the books of the Rockland Company for the period of one year. He showed a copy of a traffic agreement the company had with the Maine Central Railroad, and another with the Penobscot Navigation Company.

"What I can't show you, Mr. Hawks," he said, "is the running expenses of the executive offices in this city; but as you are a business man you can form some clear idea of that yourself."

"You needn't worry about that, Harding. You have stated the main things very clearly, and I see you thoroughly understand the chief features of the ice business. A little figuring will show what capital will be necessary to put a company in operation. To that must be added the cost of building the ice houses and other buildings, buying the horses and the tools required in the business. All that can be easily ascertained by asking for estimates on them. Now we come to the point that has puzzled me a bit from the first, and that is where are we to go for the ice? If we have to go far up the Penobscot, for that river, of course, is the field you naturally have selected, the cost of transportation will be a serious item. The Kennebec Ice Company, our rival, has, you tell me, acquired the plant of the Rockland concern, and will take possession in two weeks. Where, then, will the new company come in?"

"The moment I got the tip from my old superintendent that the Rockland Company was going out of business and was negotiating with the Ken-

nebec Ice Company, I set my wits to work to consider the future. As a result I thought of forming a new company. I foresaw, however, that I had to checkmate the Kennebec people at the start, or I might as well abandon my plans. I found that the five-year contracts with the people who own property right on the river expired this year. It would be necessary for the Kennebec Company to renew them in order to harvest ice on the fields near their ice houses. I decided to block them in this most important particular, so I had contracts printed in my own name, visited the people and secured their names to them. There is the bunch," and Jack pointed to the bundle of contracts which represented the key to the situation, and in theory, at least, made him a young ice king.

CHAPTER XIII.—Jack's New Ice Company Becomes a Fact.

Mr. Hawks looked astonished.

"Do you mean to say that you have secured control of the choicest part of the Penobscot ice fields for the next five years?" he said.

"That's exactly what I mean to say; but, unless the company is formed I can't hold it, for payments will have to be made in November or the contracts will be broken."

"I see. Upon my word, you have a great head, young man! As the case stands now, if you are able to make the first annual payments the Kennebec Company will be unable to harvest ice anywhere near their plant."

"That's it exactly. In any event, these contracts are valuable if I could be sure of raising the money necessary to hold them, for I could make a good bonus from the Kennebec Company in return for signing them over."

"I'll bet you could."

"Now, with these contracts in our possession, I believe that the new company will be able to drive the Kennebec Company out of the river, and make it sell out the plant it has just acquired from the Rockland Company."

"I believe you, Harding. You are certainly a most unusual boy. You've got the head for running a big enterprise, and for thinking out points that would escape many clever people. I am satisfied that you have pointed the way to a good thing, and I am with you in it. By the way, Miss Falkland told me that you and she are engaged to be married."

"That's right," nodded Jack, "but not until I have made my mark. She is a wealthy girl, and when I take her I propose to have something to show myself. I suggested that she take stock in this new company because I consider it will prove a paying investment. I have no capital myself, it is true, but I believe my knowledge of the business, the contracts I have secured, and my ability to pilot the company to success is worth all the capital I would otherwise be called on to put up."

"I agree with you. The idea is yours, and but for your foresight and sagacity the scheme could scarcely be put through. I will organize the company and secure all the necessary capital, and I'll see that you get stock enough to satisfy your ambition, and that you are elected president and general manager."

"Thank you, sir. With your help I have no

doubt the company can be organized and put in operation; and I will see that it becomes a success."

The interview having come to a satisfactory conclusion, Jack bade Mr. Hawks good-by and returned to the red house. Before tea he told Amine all that had taken place between him and her trustee, and she congratulated him on the prospects of his becoming a boy ice king. After tea they rode to the railroad station together, where he took the night train for Elmdale. When Jack called Abe Meadows and Phil Taylor into his office next morning and told them that the plant had been sold to the Kennebec Ice Company, and that their services would not be required after two weeks, they looked surprised and down in the mouth.

"That's fierce," said Meadows. "Blamed if I know where to look for another job."

"Nor I," added Taylor gloomily.

"Don't worry. If you don't mind being out a little while, I'll see that you get jobs as good as you have now, with prospects of advancement," cried Jack.

"Will you?" exclaimed Meadows, brightening up. "We both will be awfully obliged to you. By the way, are you going to get a better job under the new order of things?"

"No. I'm not going to work for the Kennebec people. I have much better prospects, and through these prospects I'm going to place both of you chaps."

"You're a brick, Harding," said Meadows enthusiastically. "I'm ashamed to remember that I once was down on you and would have been guilty of 'most any kind of a mean trick to get square with you because you happened to be smarter than I was if I hadn't been afraid of being caught at it."

"Oh, well, it's past and gone now. There is no use of stirring up muddy water," said Jack with a smile.

Toward the end of the week Jack received a letter from Mr. Hawks informing him that he had secured the promise of enough capital to start the company on a substantial basis, and that he had employed Amine's lawyer to draft articles of incorporation.

"I suppose you will be back here in about a week, as soon as the Kennebec Company takes formal possession of the plant," he wrote. "I have arranged to have the first meeting immediately after your arrival, so that you can personally explain matters to the gentlemen who have promised me that they will take stock in the new company. I have already done it in a general way, but your statements, coming from a practical mind, will impress them much better, and I am satisfied none of the gentlemen will draw out after that."

There was one thing Mr. Hawks might have said but didn't, and that was that it had been arranged between him and Amine that she was to take \$25,000 worth of stock for herself and another \$25,000 worth for Jack to insure his becoming the head of the new company. This amount, with the \$15,000 Mr. Hawks proposed to invest himself, insured the control of the company to Jack and would make him a young ice king, which was the aim of his ambition.

About the middle of the following week the superintendent who was to take charge of the

plant for the Kennebec Company made his appearance, with a note of introduction to Jack.

The boy showed him all over the place, and explained to him whatever he wanted to know.

When the ceremony was over he invited Jack to dine with him, and he accepted.

During the meal the new super offered Jack the position of general assistant to him.

"Thanks for your offer, Mr. Ganzel, but I am already provided for," the boy answered.

"Indeed! I am sorry I should have liked to have had you. Mr. Wills strongly recommended you to the president of the company, and I was told to hire you."

"Oh, I guess you won't find any trouble securing a competent assistant," said Jack.

"The woods are full of average people; the point I am aiming at is to get hold of somebody above the average."

Jack agreed with him and they parted in a friendly way. On the following Saturday the Kennebec Company entered into possession of the plant, and Jack returned to B—— with his trunk. Meadows and Taylor were temporarily retained by the new superintendent, but both told Jack that they would leave any time that he notified them that he was ready to place them.

Of course Jack put up at the red house, for Amine wouldn't hear of him going anywhere else.

On Monday he called on Mr. Hawks and had a long talk with him about the new ice company.

The gentleman's report was very satisfactory to the boy, and it was arranged that the first meeting of those gentlemen who had signified their intention of becoming stockholders would be called at Mr. Hawks' office on Wednesday afternoon.

When Jack appeared a little after the hour set he was introduced to eight well-dressed men.

In a few minutes Mr. Hawks called on him to explain the scope and prospects of the new ice company. He did so, and at the conclusion of his statement, which he backed up with facts and figures, the company was informally organized under the name of the Penobscot Ice Company, the capital stock fixed at \$150,000 (1,500 shares at \$100 each), and it was arranged that Jack was to receive \$25,000 worth gratis in consideration of the fact that he was the originator of the scheme, and for signing over the contracts representing the ice-cutting privileges.

Mr. Hawks then said that Harding would pay \$25,000 cash for another 250 shares.

This was the amount Amine insisted on loaning her young lover. Amine went down for \$25,000 and Mr. Hawks himself for \$15,000 worth of stock.

That gave Jack control of the company by a majority of 800 out of 1,500 shares, the other gentlemen signing for the remaining 700 shares between them.

In due time the company was incorporated, and Jack was elected president and general manager.

The capital stock was all paid in to Mr. Hawks, who was elected treasurer.

Jack then laid his plan of operations before the board of directors and was authorized to go ahead.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Boy Ice King Wins Out.

When the announcement was made in the newspapers of the incorporation of the Penobscot Ice

Company the Kennebec people were surprised, but they were not particularly worried.

They believe they had the bulge on the business, for, through the purchase of the Rockland Company, they had come into control of the ice business throughout New England and they didn't see how a rival had any chance, unless its purpose was to help in supplying the New York market, and perhaps run an independent trade in the city of Boston if it could secure enough customers.

This complacency, however, did not last long.

As soon as the superintendent at Elmdale got things working to suit him he started out to renew the contracts with the people from whom the Rockland Company had bought its ice-cutting privileges.

He was paralyzed to find that these privileges, covering the usual five-year term, had already been bought up by Jack Harding in his own name.

He immediately notified the main office at Portland of the situation.

The president came on at once to see about it.

After ascertaining that the fact was beyond dispute, he called on the late president of the defunct Rockland Company and demanded an explanation.

That gentleman was astounded and could give him none.

The only thing to do was to hunt up Jack Harding.

"This is evidently a sharp trick on the boy's part to hold us up for a bonus," said the president of the Kennebec company; "but it won't work. He'll have to make his payments in November, or lose the advantage he has obtained. Where will he get the money to do that?"

"No matter, you'd better make terms with him," replied the ex-president, "and in a hurry, too."

"Why?" asked the surprised Kennebec official.

"He might take his pigs to the opposition market."

"What do you mean?"

"Have you forgotten about this new ice company, the Penobscot, that has lately been incorporated? Suppose he were to offer his contracts for sale to that company, don't you think the manager would snap them up in short order? Then your Rockland plant would be placed in a fine hole."

The president of the Kennebec Company realized that the only way was to come to terms with Harding.

His consternation was great when he discovered that the boy was president and general manager of the rival company.

To treat with him for the surrender of the contracts was clearly out of the question.

He called on him to find out what his plans were.

"Our plans," replied Jack, "is to harvest the ice within the radius we control."

"But you have no plant on the ground," said the Kennebec president. "Where will you store it?"

"I am just considering the estimates submitted by contractors who guarantee to put up the houses on the ground adjoining your property, of which I have secured a lease for a term of years, and have them ready for business by the first of January."

Although it was not a warm day the perspiration broke-out on his visitor's forehead.

"I call this business an outrage," he said warmly. "You had no right to go around and secure those contracts while an employee of the Rockland Ice Company. It was a piece of sharp practice."

"As I was about to lose my position through the transfer of the plant I consider I was perfectly justified in consulting my own interests—and future."

"I deny it. We shall contest your right in court."

"Do so. I have consulted eminent counsel and we feel secure in our position."

"Very well, we shall see. We do not propose to be checkmated in this way if we can help it."

"You will find that you are powerless to prevent us going ahead and exercising our rights. I have transferred the contracts to this company, and the payments will be duly made when the time comes. If you admit that you are in a hole I will make you a cash offer for your plant up the river instead of building a new one. I have figured its value out and will offer you so much," and Jack mentioned a sum he was willing to pay.

"No, young man," thundered the irate official, "you can't work the squeeze game on us! You can't buy that plant for any such sum, or at all!"

"Very well," replied the boy ice king coolly. "I shall sign a building contract the day after tomorrow. When the harvest time comes we will be ready for it."

That closed the interview, and the president of the Kennebec Company retired conscious that his Penobscot Branch was in a big hole. He hurried back to Portland and called a meeting of the board of directors to consider the situation.

It was decided to sell their Penobscot plant and withdraw from the river, as they did not feel they could afford either to build a new plant higher up or ship 100,000 tons of ice to the Elmdale plant by rail. A telegram was, therefore, despatched to Jack Harding accepting his offer.

Thus the boy ice king won his first big victory. The money was paid over and the Penobscot Company took possession of the Elmdale plant at once.

Jack put Abe Meaows in charge as superintendent and made Phil Taylor head bookkeeper and cashier. When the harvest time came around he went on the ground himself and watched Meadows handle the job. The young fellow got a hustle on and did very well indeed. As it was clearly impossible for the Kennebec Company to supply a tenth part of the customers it had acquired through the purchase of the Rockland Company, owing to its compulsory withdrawal from the Penobscot River, Jack felt he would have no great difficulty in finding customers, by pushing matters, for his whole output.

The Kennebec Company controlled Boston, and the Rockland Company never seriously menaced their hold there.

The boy ice king was a fighter from the word go, and he determined to invade the city and start and get a foothold there. This he did, and a great howl came from the Kennebec people.

They put forth their best effort to beat him, but though they had every advantage on their side he pushed the fight so hard that at the end of Jack's first season he had captured nearly half of the city.

This was the boy ice king's second victory.

CHAPTER XV.—Conclusion.

The financial returns of the first year were very satisfactory to the stockholders of the Penobscot Ice Company, and they were satisfied that Jack Harding, boy though he was, was a hustler from start to finish. The rush season was over and Jack took a run down to Elmdale with a contractor to arrange for the building of another ice house for he intended to harvest more ice and do a bigger business next year.

Jack had harvested his ice much quicker and cheaper than the Rockland people had ever done, and he was figuring on other improvements for the coming season. The old method was to use a horse and two men to elevate each cake of ice from the canal to the staging. Jack did away with that system entirely. He figured out that a common steam engine of forty horsepower would do the work of a hundred and fifty men and seventy-five horses, and do it quicker and better.

The scheme he devised was as follows:

Two wheels, one at the water and the other at the top of the first ice house.

An endless chain passed over them, hung full of grapples. When set in motion by the steam engine the floating blocks, of two cakes each, were fed into a little slip under the lower wheel, which revolved just above the water.

They were there seized by the grapples, which, coming down empty on the upper side of the moving chain, returned loaded on the under side.

Stiff rattan brooms, fastened to the platform, swept the blocks clean as the grapples carried them up.

The crystallized river water was thus elevated by this chain arrangement, and poured into the ice house window — the rattling and sliding masses, as they flew along the stagings, resembling an endless train of silver-bright cars seen on high bridges in the distance.

This improved method Jack had introduced only at the upper two ice houses, as he had no time to apply it to the bigger plant at Elmdale the first season, and it worked like a charm.

A force of men were now at work at the Elmdale building four stagings, one above another, running the whole length of the long row of ice houses. An endless chain arrangement was being put up at one end only as one machine would answer for elevating the ice to all the houses. The blocks would be launched by the grapples upon a short inclined plane, which would send them sliding down the gently sloping staging to the windows, where they would be seized by the men stationed there. The houses being filled to the level of one staging, the ice would then, by a slight alteration in the machinery, be carried up to the next, and so on until the houses would be completely loaded up.

After the departure of the contractor Jack was standing in front of the long row of ice houses at the Elmdale plant, watching the construction of the staging, when he was approached by a rough-looking man who had been hanging around the place for some time.

"Boss, can I get a job here?" he said in a tone that sounded kind of familiar in the boy's ear.

"I couldn't say," replied Jack, eying the fellow sharply. "You'll have to ask the foreman. I'm

afraid, however, that we have as many people now as we want."

"Then lend a chap a dollar, will you?" he said. "I'm hard up."

Jack put his hand in his pocket and tendered him a bright silver quarter.

"I'm not giving dollars away just at present. That will buy you a meal," he said, for he didn't like the sinister look in the eye of the bearded man, and did not believe he was a deserving object of charity.

"What's a quarter?" sneered the fellow. "It ain't no good. I wouldn't be after wipin' me old shoes on that. I want a dollar," he added impudently.

The way he said "I wouldn't be after wipin' me old shoes on that," brought a flash of recollection across the boy ice king's brain. He recognized the rascal at once. It was Limerick, the ringleader of the four men who had attacked him that night on the road to Ice House No. 1, tied him to the restive mare, and, but for good luck, would have caused his death in a horrid manner. The scoundrel had made his escape at the time and had not since been heard from.

"So you don't want a quarter, then?" replied Jack.

"No, I don't. I want a dollar."

"Well, you'll have to want it, Limerick. I fancy you'll not need money, anyway, for I'm going to have you arrested and taken to jail on that old charge of murderous assault, for which two of your three companions are now paying the penalty in State prison," said Jack.

"So you know me, do you?" snarled Limerick, with a vengeful look in his eyes.

"I know you, all right."

"And you're goin' to have me arrested?"

"That's as true as you're standing there."

"You'll never have me pinched! I'll kill you first!"

As he hissed the words out he flashed a knife from his pocket and sprang at the boy ice king. Jack was on his guard, however, and, springing lightly aside, he grasped the wrist of the descending arm that held the weapon, and with a wrench caused the rascal to drop it with a howl of pain. Then with his left fist the boy jabbed Limerick in the jaw with all his might. The scoundrel fell back a few feet, but recovering himself made a second rush at the young president and manager of the ice company. Jack grappled with him and the two engaged in a terrific struggle for the mastery. It didn't last long, for the scrap had attracted the attention of Meadows, who saw the man's attack on Jack from the office window. Abe dashed out at once to the assistance of the boy ice king.

He seized the infuriated Limerick by the neck, and two or three of the laborers coming up; the rascal was secured and tied. Jack telephoned police headquarters and a patrol wagon came after Limerick. In a short time he was tried on the original charge, convicted, and sent to join Donohue and Magann in prison. The Penobscot Company harvested 120,000 tons of ice that winter, and during the summer pushed the Kennebec Company so hard for its trade that the older company failed to make near as much money as usual. Jack learned that a lot of the Kennebec stock was for sale. This encouraged him to believe that the stockholders of that company were

getting disgusted with their returns, so he made a move that he had had in his mind's eye from the first—he offered to buy the Kennebec Company out, offering part cash, and the balance in notes to be secured by a first mortgage on the entire property of his company.

After some delay his offer was accepted, and the control of the ice business throughout all New England came into the hands of the Penobscot Ice Company, and Jack was now alluded to in the newspapers as the boy ice king. Being now launched on the top wave of prosperity, Jack felt that he was in a position to marry the girl of his choice. Amine made a lovely bride, and the officials and employees of the ice company gave them a grand send-off on their honeymoon. All this happened many years ago, and today Jack Harding is a very wealthy man, and his company supplies ice to New York City in addition to all New England. The main office of the Penobscot Ice Company is now in Portland, and there Jack lives in sumptuous style with Amine, his wife, with whom he often talks over the old times when he first became a boy ice king.

Next week's issue will contain "FOUR OF A KIND; OR, THE COMBINATION THAT MADE WALL STREET HUM."

KING TO USE COMMUNION PLATE OF GOLD PRESENTED BY AMERICAN

During the royal family's brief holiday at Sandringham the service of gold communion plate presented to King George by Rodman Wanamaker, of New York, is being used for the first time. The service, which is set with diamonds and rubies, and includes paten, chalice, bread box, vessels for wine and water and an alms dish is described as one of the most valuable in the country.

The service was consecrated this week by the Rev. A. Fuller, domestic chaplain to the King, and it will be reserved for use in the Sandringham parish church while the royal family is in residence. This is Mr. Wanamaker's third gift to the Sandringham Church, the others being a silver altar as memorial to King Edward VII and a silver and oak pulpit in celebration of Queen Alexandra's eightieth birthday. Mr. Wanamaker is a friend of the royal family and was a great admirer of King Edward.

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The Wall Street Hoodoo

— or —

The Boy the Brokers Feared

By Gaston Garne

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER IV.—(continued)

He actually doubled his earnings, determined to fight it out with the bootblacks for the position in the Wall Street district.

Now he found himself written up in an afternoon paper as "Bog, the Hoodoo."

At first he was tickled; then he felt proud of the comments made about him by the reporter.

He bought several copies of the paper and hid them away in his room.

He sent one to his mother by his little twelve-year-old sister, whose name was Dora.

Then he gave a copy to Aunt Dicey, the old colored fruit and cake woman.

"Why, de land sakes, honey," she said to him, "how you learn to hoodoo folkses?"

"Why, I caught it from you, Aunt Dicey," he said. "I'm a great hoodoo, let me tell you. I can hoodoo a billy-goat and make him butt everything in the block."

The old woman laughed until she shook.

The newsboys told all the bootblacks in the block where he lived about it, and when they read the story they believed it implicitly, but long before that they learned to let him alone because he had a strong arm and a hard fist.

The next day after the publication of his Wall Street experience he went down to that locality at his usual hour.

The other bootblacks were on the lookout for him, but they had read the story, and now they gazed at him more in a spirit of curiosity than of anger, and they thought twice before tackling him again. Not a word did he have to say to any of them; so a week passed without any further trouble.

But one morning a bootblack came down with a friend of his, a big tough-looking chap about eighteen years of age. He had said he could knock all the hoodoo out of Bob in one round. The fellow was not a bootblack, but the bootblacks got around him and heard what he said about his ability to knock the hoodoo out of him, and they were all eager to see him do it.

Bob was around on Broad street, polishing a broker's shoes. The broker was quizzing him about his being a hoodoo.

Bob laughed good-naturedly and said:

"Yes, sir. I guess I can hoodoo some people."

"How do you do it?" the broker asked.

"I ain't giving it away, sir," he replied.

"Oh, you are keeping a corner in hoodooism, eh?"

"Yes, sir. You folks down here get up corners in stocks, but as I haven't any stocks, I just corner hoodooism."

When he finished the job and received his nickel Bob arose, holding his shoe-box by the strap. He looked around for another customer,

when the big eighteen-year-old champion of the bootblacks walked up to him with a swagger, wearing his cap over his left ear, and said to him:

"Say, youse want to get out of this. This ain't your beat."

"What's the matter with you?" Bob asked. "Are you crazy, or do you own Broad street?"

"Yes, I own Broad street and Wall Street and Broadway, too," was the swaggering reply, as he seized Bob by the collar of his coat and gave him a jerk forward, adding:

"Now you git, or somebody will have to carry your pieces home in a basket."

With that he jerked him forward as if to give him a start on his way homeward.

The next instant Bob butted him in the stomach, and sent him rolling into the gutter.

As he arose to his feet Bob smashed him with his shoe-box and down he went again.

"There, you are hoodooed," said Bob. "You get out, now, or I'll turn you into a gutter rat."

The fellow tried to scramble to his feet, muttering threats of murder and all that sort of thing, when Bob hit him with the shoe-box again.

It was as strong as a cobblestone.

The young bully thought he had been struck by a thunderbolt.

"Give him another one, Bob," said the broker, who was standing by looking on.

"That's enough, sir," said Bob. "He is hoodooed, and it seemed as if he really was, for the fellow picked himself up and hurried away without once looking back at Bob."

He turned the corner of Broad and Wall streets and disappeared in the direction of Broadway.

Several brokers had seen the encounter from the beginning to the end, and one of them came up laughing and said:

"Give me a shine, Bob. I've got onto your way of hoodooing. It would hoodoo anybody to hit him with that shoe-box."

"Yes, sir. But that wasn't all I done to him. I did hoodoo him, and he won't come back here any more."

"Say, does your hoodoo follow a fellow after you get through with him?"

"You bet it does," he replied, as he spread his little piece of carpet on the pavement, and kneeling down, began work on the gentleman's shoes.

CHAPTER V.

The Hoodooed Boots.

It was an early hour in the morning when the brokers were coming down to their offices, and quite a number, seeing the encounter, stopped to look on.

Some of them went over to speak to Bob, and the broker whose shoes he was polishing said:

"Say, why don't you fellows have your shoes hoodooed?"

Another one asked:

"Say, does he give hoodoo shines?"

"Yes, but you have to pay extra for them," and with that the broker tossed Bob a quarter and asked the question:

"Now, Bob, will that shine last all day? Is it a regular hoodoo shine?"

"Yes, sir. If you'll keep out of the dirt."

The brokers laughed at what they considered a witty reply, but as the majority of them left home with their shoes already shined, very few of them needed a shine that morning, but they quizzed Bob a good deal about his hoodoo business.

Those Wall Street operators are always ready for a joke and a hearty laugh.

Bob was so respectful to them that they took a fancy to him.

"Look here, Bob, where did you learn that hoodoo business?" one of them inquired.

"From old Aunt Dicey, a colored woman who runs a cake and pie stand uptown."

"All right. If you'll get her to tell you how to hoodoo the broker who is trying to get the best of you in a deal I'll divvy with you."

"All right, sir," and he dropped down on his knees in front of another man and began work on his shoes.

Bob knew that they were all guying him, but he didn't mind it so long as it brought him business.

Finally the man whose shoes he was polishing said to him:

"Say, Bob, here comes a man who is one of the biggest operators on the Street. I'm bucking against him today in a stock deal. If you'll put a hoodoo on him I'll give you a ten-dollar bill."

"Where is he, sir?" and Bob looked down the street and saw a sporty gentleman wearing a silk hat with a massive watch-chain stretched across his vest front.

"You mean that big one, sir?" he inquired.

"Yes. Put a spell on him."

Bob was in for anything to please his customers, so he looked at the man and made several funny motions with his hat, winding up with planting his right fist into the palm of his left hand with all the force he could command, saying:

"He is hoodooed, but I don't know what is going to happen to him."

"All right; I'll keep an eye on him."

"Well, don't forget that ten-dollar bill."

"What's the matter with you putting a hoodoo on that?" the broker asked.

"Can't do it sir."

"Why can't you?"

"Because it isn't alive."

"Thunder! I thought money was very much alive down here."

"Well, I haven't seen any live money yet, although it does put a lot of life into a fellow when he gets it into his pocket."

The broker had passed about ten paces beyond where Bob and the broker were standing, when he stepped upon a piece of banana-peel and fell heavily on the pavement. Being a heavy man, he was hurt.

Several ran to his assistance, but he seemed unable to walk, so a carriage was called, and when they placed him inside of it, it drove off uptown with him.

The broker looked at Bob, and Bob returned his gaze and held out his hand for the ten-dollar bill.

The broker placed it in his hand without utter-

ing a word and went off up the street as if feeling guilty of really having done something wrong.

Bob quietly sat down on his box to do some thinking, wondering if he had really put a hoodoo on the man.

"What are you doing there, Bob?" a man asked, stopping in front of him, "hoodooing somebody?"

"No, sir. I'm waiting for a customer."

"Well, here comes one," and the man pointed to another coming up the street, evidently a countryman, for he wore a pair of cowhide boots that probably hadn't been blackened in a month.

Bob smiled, shook his head and said:

"That's his style, sir. He doesn't want a shine."

"I guess you are right, but if you'll shine them up for him I'll pay for it myself."

"All right, sir," and Bob arose to his feet, and as the countryman came up he said:

"Say mister, let me shine your boots; it won't cost you a cent."

"Waal, if you don't charge nuthin'," said the countryman, who had been drinking, looking down at his boots, "why you can git to work."

Bob asked him to lean up against the side of the house and put his foot on his box.

The countryman was suspicious, and looking at the other man, he said:

"Say, mister, you heard him say he wouldn't charge nuthin', didn't you?"

"Oh, yes. That's the bargain. He can't make you pay."

"Go ahead, sonny," said the countryman, and Bob went to work and polished his boots from soles clear up to the top of the legs, for his trousers were inside of them.

Several times the countryman looked down and exclaimed:

"Gosh!"

The broker watched the operation with much interest and invited several other brokers to watch the hoodoo operation.

"Gosh!" said the countryman, who had had one or two drinks of whisky, "I didn't know they shined boots for nuthin' in New York."

"Well, you'd have to pay anybody but him. He is the official hoodoo shiner of the city," remarked one of the brokers, who wanted to have some fun.

"What! A hoodoo shiner!" exclaimed the countryman.

"Yes, that's what he is. He is paid ten dollars a day for that sort of work."

"Gosh! You don't say so!"

"Yes," said the broker. "He is a hoodoo shiner. When he finishes those boots they will be hoodooed."

"Well, what will the hoodoo do?"

"Well, you'll find that out when he finishes the job, for those boots will take you just where they please, and you'll have to go whether you want to or not."

The countryman scratched his head and looked down at the boots, one of which had been finished and other about half done, and seemed to be worried.

Suddenly he said:

"Say, stop, begosh! If I can't control them boots and have to let 'em take me just where they darn please, I don't want 'em shined."

"Oh, that's all right, sir," said Bob. "You'll never get tired walking in them. They'll do the walking themselves."

"Yes, begosh! And they'll carry me where I don't want to go."

"Oh, you are too late now. They'll take you along in spite of yourself."

The brokers laughed.

A crowd of about a score had gathered him.

He drew a flask of whisky from his pocket, took a big pull at it, returned it to its place and deliberately sat down on the pavement and pulled off the boots, saying:

"Begosh, they can walk by themselves. They can't take me where I don't want to go," and gathering them up, he started off up the street, carrying the boots in his hands.

The brokers fell against each other and yelled, while the man who had agreed to pay for the shine handed Bob a silver dollar.

CHAPTER VI.

Bob Makes a Deal in Wall Street.

As quite natural under the circumstances, the crowd followed the countryman to the corner of Wall and Broad streets.

A policeman came along and found that the attraction was the countryman with his newly-polished boots in his hands and walking in his stocking feet.

"Say, what's the matter with you? Why don't you put on those boots? You are obstructing the street."

"Gosh! That shiner has hoodooed them. If I put them on they'll run away with me."

"Well, I'll run you in if you don't put them on," so he ordered him to sit down on the steps of one of the big office buildings and pull the boots on.

He was really frightened. But he thought that it was safer to risk the boots than to be run in by the policeman. As soon as he got them on he made a break toward the river.

He was an awkward fellow, and before he had gone a block he had run into half a dozen people.

Twice he collided with citizens, and they rolled on the pavement together.

It was fun for the brokers, and they raced after him.

The countryman was gasping:

"Gosh! Gosh!" every time he collided with some one.

Suddenly he thought the boots were running away with him, as the liquor he drank had got the best of him.

He seized a lamp post and hugged it tightly for fear they would run into the river and drown him.

The policeman decided he was drunk and took charge of him and conducted him to the police station.

The incident was another sensation for the reporter, and several of the afternoon papers had varying accounts of it.

Several brokers chipped in fifty-cent and dollar pieces to Bob, saying that he was giving them more fun than they had had in that Street during the season.

Several of them offered him big pay if he would hoodoo certain others in the party.

"Well," said Bob, "you'll have to let me do it when he doesn't know it. I can't very well put a spell on a man if he is watching me and expecting it."

The other bootblacks were following the crowd, watching them in feigned astonishment.

They wondered what strange fellow had come down into Wall Street to take their business away from them.

When they were told that he had hoodooed the countryman's boots, they believed it implicitly, and not for a ten-dollar bill could one of them have been induced to go near him.

That funny incident was a small fortune to Bob, for that night in his room he counted up about twenty-one dollars in coin, including the ten he had received from the broker when the big fellow slipped on a banana peel.

He was afraid to leave the money in his room because the papers had said so much about his success downtown, so he carried it with him when he went down the next morning.

There again he saw the other bootblacks watching him, but not one spoke to him.

It was about noon when a broker named Hennessey, who was a jolly, wholesoul fellow and a great clubman, met him on the Street and said:

"Say, you hoodoo, I want a shine. Come up into my office."

"All right, sir," and Bob followed him up two flights of stairs into his office, where he polished his shoes while the broker was looking over his correspondence.

When he finished the job he gave him a dime.

"Now, Bob," said he, "the fellow who can hoodoo things as you do ought to buy stock and hoodoo the market."

"That's just what I'm going to do, sir, when I can get money enough."

"Oh, you don't want so much money. Buy on a margin. I'll give you a tip. Go over to the bank across the street, in the front of this building, give the margin clerk one hundred dollars and direct him to buy ten shares of J. & D."

"Well, I must wait till I can get the hundred dollars, sir."

"Thunder! Haven't you any money saved up?"

"Yes, sir; but not that much."

"How much have you?"

Bob hesitated.

Then he said:

"I've got about forty dollars, sir."

"Well, that isn't enough. The least they will take margins for is ten shares. Give me your forty dollars and I'll add sixty to it, and maybe you'll come out a hundred dollars ahead."

Bob had shined for Hennessey many times and liked him on account of his pleasant sociability.

"I haven't but half of it with me. I'll run up to my room and get the balance, sir."

"Bring it in the morning with you. That will be time enough. But look here, Bob. You keep your mouth shut. Don't say anything to anybody about it."

"All right, sir," and he went out on the Street again and kept pretty busy until the brokers went back uptown. Then he made his way to Delancey street and thought over the matter quite seriously.

(To be continued).

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, JULY 15, 1927

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

PARIS HAS NEED OF AIR POLICE

Aviators throwing handbills in the streets have been ordered prosecuted for violation of a city ordinance, just as any ordinary pedestrian would be. The police have been given the job, but they don't know how to do it.

BRITISH GAME PRESERVES TO HAVE RECORD SEASON

More shootings will be met this year than any year since the war. America has invaded the Scottish moorlands, the Norfolk partridge shootings and the Midland coverts. The salmon rivers are also in great demand.

Gunmakers and sporting equipment firms are having a setady rush of sales. One Bond Street concern says that it has not sold as many guns and fishing tackle since the war. Scotland is cannily looking forward to the most brilliant season for many years.

GERMAN USES COMPRESSED PAPER TO BUILD BOATS

Paper canoes and rowboats are the latest invention of Willie Schauer, an enterprising builder in Karlstadt-on-the-Main.

Schauer contends that boats made of compressed paper in accordance with his process are durable and no more subject to the disintegrating influence of water than are wooden or metal boats. He has made numerous tests with a paper paddle boat and is completely satisfied with the results.

EVERYTHING IN ROOM SEEN IN RELATION TO FLOOR, SAYS DECORATOR

"Everything in a room is seen in relation to the floor," is the opinion of Pierre Dutel, noted interior decorator and architect of New York.

"Upon it place your furniture and fine fabric rugs," says Mr. Dutel. "It is a decorative foundation as well as the architectural base. For that reason it must have color and design."

"In my work as a decorator I find that the new linoleum designs are particularly helpful. They

are not high priced. They can be laid to last for many years if placed over builders' deadening felt, and they are wholly satisfactory from a comfort standpoint—springy and quiet, and very easily cleaned.

"I emphasize linoleum mainly, however, because of the strides that have been made in the last few years in designs of outstanding beauty. Some of these new designs, called 'Embossed Handcraft Inlaids,' even have a texture that you can see and feel. Rich in color, these embossed designs lend warmth and interest, especially to a room of Spanish influence. Every home decorator who believes with me that room beauty begins with floor beauty will investigate modern linoleum floors."

LAUGHS

DOING THE CAT'S WORK

Motorist: I killed your cat. I shall replace the animal.

Old Maid: This is so sudden, but I'm afraid you can't catch mice.—Okla. Whirlwind.

JUST FACES

Be it ever so homely, there's no face like one's own!—N. Y. State Lion.

THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME

"I went up to the lake for a rest during the vacation and I met the most wonderful girl in the world."

"And then what?"

"Well, you can imagine the rest."—Wesleyan Wasp.

THE WRONG WAY IS RIGHT

"He always rubs me in the wrong way."

"Who?"

"That guy in the Turkish bath."—Pitt Panther.

TOAST AND—

Here's a toast to ye co-ed queens—

Here's the toast and a can of sardines.

—Grinnell Malteaser.

NO DRINKER

I simply cannot drink. Why, the sight of a pretzel makes me dizzy.—Lehigh Burr.

LIMITATIONS

"Why doesn't Gerald get over?"

"He's just a two pun man."—Agrievator.

ANY OLD NAME

Jack: Was she the kind of a girl you'd give your name to?

Black: Yes, but not your right name.—Pennsylvania Punch Bowl.

AN UNFAMILIAR STEP

Several professors were telling jokes. One of them remarked, "That's a new one on me," as he scratched his head.—Okla. Whirlwind.

SPECIFIC

Orphant: Who's that boy standing over there near the horse—with goggles on?

Annie: I don't see any horse with goggles on! —N. Y. State Lion.

The Hand of Death

The night was intensely dark. The old Hudson was foaming with waves. The vessels anchored in the New York harbor were plunging and tossing, threatening at every lunge to break their moorings, and either run ashore or be swept out to sea.

Intense darkness settled over the waters, save where now and then a vivid flash of lightning played upon the scene, lighting them up with a lurid glare.

Three men were in a boat pulling directly across from the Battery, inclining their boat just a little up the river. The beautiful Hudson seemed on this particular night to be in a rage. The waves leaped high about the prow of the small boat, threatening each moment to engulf its occupants.

Those dark mysterious waters that have concealed so much of the crimes of the great city seemed now to hiss and dance with fury as the boat leaped successfully from wave to wave.

Two men were at the oars, and another sat in the stern. The oarsmen were thirty-five and forty-five years of age. Both experienced boatmen, and had evidently made the river their occupation for years.

The man in the stern of the boat was not over twenty-two or three years of age. He had a boat cloak fastened about his neck, which fell off at the shoulders, leaving the arms free. His hat had blown off, and he was bareheaded.

His eyes were glaring wildly into the dark waters which hissed and foamed about them.

"Pull, men, pull!" he almost shrieked in order to be heard above the roaring storm.

"Ay, ay, my hearties!" responded the elder of the boatmen in a voice of thunder, that had long grown accustomed to the roar of the ocean. "But I tell ye, my friend, I don't think it's worth while."

"It is worth while!" shrieked the hatless young man in the stern of the boat. "We must find them before the fiendish deed is accomplished."

A flash of lightning now showed how strangely wild the face of the young man was in the boat. His hair was blown back from his forehead, and his eyes were wildly searching the darkness. His face, once the pride of thousands, had in one brief hour of horror grown appalling.

"We'll go wherever ye say," replied the elder of the boatmen, "but it seems to me as though we're on the wrong tack."

"No, no, we must be right, we shall be right," cried the young man in the stern, who was none other than Johnnie Collins, once the pride of song and dance men of America.

He and his brother Jimmie Collins were, a few years ago, the most promising stars of the stage. It was just at the time that their fame was becoming known. Just as they were emerging from obscurity into fame and fortune, we find Johnnie, the oldest of the Collins brothers, on the Hudson in this darkness, almost distracted, as we have seen.

"This is dark sailin'," said Jack Noel to his companion at the oars. "I am sure, Joe, it is the darkest night I ever dipped an oar in my life."

"I believe you, Jack," said his companion, Joe Johnson. "One can't see an oar's length, and we are liable to run into some ship's riggin' an' be dashed to pieces at any moment."

"Come, Joe, don't prove yourself a coward an' disgrace the name o' a salt."

Joe was silenced. The insinuation doubting his courage had effectually stopped his murmurs.

The boat dashed on amid the roaring waves. The eyes of Johnnie Collins were wildly staring over the dark waters, waiting to take in all that the vivid flash of lightning might reveal.

Heavy peals of thunder rolled along the horizon and shook the earth. The lightning leaped from wave to wave along the waters, or danced on the shore. There was one sharp peal more heavy than any that had preceded it. At the same moment the lurid glare of livid sheets of flame encompassed a noble brig that stood at anchor nearby.

Mast, shroud, and rigging were one living blaze of fire. The boat sheered off from the burning ship and soon passed beyond the circle of its light, into the impenetrable darkness.

"Pull, for the love of heaven, pull!" cried the excited actor, now standing up in the stern of the boat, and wildly urging the men onward.

His eyes had caught sight of a boat half a mile in the distance, pulling toward the pier.

The men redoubled their strokes, and the boat skimmed over the water like a storm-bird.

"Heaven grant we may be in time! Heaven spare him until I come to his assistance! The accursed villains! I have watched them for a week, and feared that they would yet overcome my poor brother. Oh, I felt it, and I feel it now, that when they induced him to go off with them today that his destruction would be the result. When I found that he had today given a check for all we both have made, I knew that he was ruined. When the detective told me that he had traced them to the boat-house on the river, I had my fears realized."

The above soliloquy was loud enough for the keen ears of the boatmen to hear it. Old Jack Noel was so inquisitive that he again ventured to ask:

"Do you think the sharks has got some one?"

"They have—they have! You could find no more appropriate name for them than sharks."

"Who is it, shipmate?"

"My brother."

"An' they've robbed him?"

"Yes—yes."

"An' goin' to drown him?"

"Yes, yes, unless we get to them in time," cried Johnnie, wild with fear. "Pull, men, pull, as you value your lives."

Another vivid flash of lightning, and Johnnie Collins, who had again seated himself at the stern, started up with a cry.

"Sit down, shipmate—sit down!" yelled Jack Noel, with a loud stentorian voice. "You'll fall overboard ef ye don't keep yer seat."

The vivid flash of lightning had revealed a boat in the distance, with three or four occupants.

"Heavens, we move too slow!" cried the brother, almost distracted.

"We are goin' as fast as mortals kin drive the boat," answered Jack Noel.

A wild cry now arose over the water. The young actor in the stern of Jack Noel's boat again sprang to his feet.

"Sit down, young man, as yer value your life—sit down!" cried old Jack.

Thus admonished Johnnie Collins took his seat. "It is his voice—it is Jimmie!" cried the young actor.

"Help, help!" came the gurgling cry, borne on the stormy winds to their ears.

"Keep yer seat, young man!" cried the old boatman. "We'll get there much sooner by yer remainin' still."

Another gurgling cry came in the darkness, this time not a dozen oars' lengths away.

The plunge of a heavy body in the waters immediately followed.

The rain had been falling in perfect torrents for the last five minutes.

"Hold, hold!" cried Johnnie Collins, as the boat came to the spot where the last gurgling cry and plunge had been heard. "He has been thrown overboard here somewhere. Look, look, for the love of Heaven!—look now with all your eyes when the next flash of lightning reveals the face of the waters."

It came.

A crack of thunder seemed to rend the sphere in twain, and a lurid glare of lightning lit up the entire scene for many rods around.

Johnnie Collins uttered a cry of horror.

"Back, back on your oars!" he shrieked.

Not a half a cable's length in their wake was a hand—a single human hand—protruding above the dark waters.

Old Jack Noel saw it, and shuddered. It looked like the icy hand of death. Pushing back on their oars, the boat glided stern foremost toward the fearful object. Johnnie Collins sat in the stern of the boat, ready to grasp it.

The lightning's constant play revealed it. Nearer and nearer, until they were on the object. The young actor, bending forward, grasped it. Old Jack came to his assistance, and they dragged the body into the boat.

A single glance told Johnnie Collins that it was his brother, and that he had been slain for his money.

"Revenge—revenge!" shrieked the young actor, dropping the body of his dead brother and drawing his revolver. "Pull, pull after that boat!"

A flash of lightning revealed the boat, with only three men in it, not more than a dozen cable lengths away.

Crack!

A pistol shot whizzed above the boat.

"Let me in the bow," said Johnnie, in a cool, determined voice.

Clutching his heavy revolver, he took his position. He cocked his pistol, and awaited the next friendly blaze of lightning that was to reveal to him the murderers of his brother.

He held the pistol in a firm hand that was steadied by determination. He spoke no word; he hardly breathed. His hand was as steady as a rock.

The flash of lightning came.

Crack—crack! went two revolver shots. A bullet grazed the head of the young actor, and one of the oarsmen of the flying boat lay struggling in the bottom, a bullet through his body.

"Forward, faster!" cried Johnnie. "One of the demons has met a just retribution."

The oarsmen in both boats now rowed for life. Old John Noel and Joe Johnson had never found their equal, and were not to be outdone on this night. Their boat bounded over the waters, and as the next flash of lightning came they were fairly against the stern of the boat of the murderers.

Johnnie Collins, like an avenging Nemesis, sprang from his own boat into the one occupied by the murderers of his brother.

Crack! crack! crack! Bang! bang! bang! rang out the rapid report of firearms sharp and clear above the roaring of the storm. Bullets flew thick and fast.

The young actor, regardless of the shots that struck his body, pressed forward on his antagonists, and shot down first one and then the other.

All three of the murders lay dead in the bottom of their boat just as old Jack and Joe Johnson, armed with their oars, sprang into the boat to aid the young avenger.

A vivid flash of lightning revealed the result of the battle.

"By the powers o' the deep, but, shipmate, ye've brought 'em all up standin', hain't ye?" cried old Jack.

"Are ye hurt?"

"Killed!" was the answer.

"Heavens, it's so!" cried the kind-hearted old sailor. "We must get these two boats in to shore at once, Joe," he added.

Johnnie Collins lived long enough after the shore was reached to give a full account of the murder at the police station. The money taken from his brother was found in the murderers' boat.

It amounted to nearly four thousand dollars.

Having no relatives, he willed it to the two faithful boatmen.

"We well earned it," said old Jack, after the two brothers were buried in one grave. "I wouldn't again look on that Hand of Death for twice that much money."

MAYFAIR CHILDREN JOIN LONDON SOCIETY WHIRL

The children of the fashionable residents of Mayfair are taking an increasing part in English society functions and their engagements are now mapped out for them on much the same lines as those of their debutante sisters.

The society child, clad in the smartest of miniature riding kits, meets her small friends in fashionable Rotten Row on their ponies and holds a court of her own.

School classes sometimes interrupt their morning hours and special dancing lessons something are flitted in. After a noon rest the small child often has a charity matinee to attend, and open air fetes for charity are largely reinforced by children who often organize such affairs themselves.

On free afternoons the young people have their own parties. After a tea a drive with mother or tennis, coaching or swimming lessons are the order until bedtime, which is anywhere from 10 until midnight.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

CORRECT SURFACE DEFECTS BEFORE APPLYING PAINT

Before any paint is applied to a concrete, stucco or brick surface, all places in which the mortar has loosened and washed out should be repainted with mortar or Portland cement. Small defects in the surface can be corrected with putty, after priming. In the painting boiled oil should be employed in the priming coat whenever possible, but if it is not available, raw oil and a little drier may be substituted.

THEATRE FOR CHILDREN NEW DRAMA DEVELOPMENT

A theatre for children is the latest development in London of the little theatre movement. London has many little theatres in out-of-the-way corners devoted to plays by comparatively unknown authors, or to such works as have little chance of commercial success, but this is the first proposal for a children's theatre.

Miss Joan Luxton, vivacious, bobbed and blue-eyed, has applied to the London County Council for a license for music, dancing and stage plays for her Children's Theatre in a street at the back of Covent Garden.

The little house will seat only 125 persons. Prices will be extremely low, from four cents upward. Performances will be in the afternoon.

NEW BUILDING BOARD HAS VARIETY OF USES

One of the recent advances in building board manufacture has been the invention of a building board which has a multitude of uses. It comes in a number of sizes and types, which makes it adapted to varied purposes. Its waterproof and weatherproof qualities fit it for either exterior or interior use, and in addition to this it is excellent as a paint base, an insulator or a decoration.

This material is divided into five general classifications. The first is a regular building board for plain construction purposes; the second is a clapboard which is popular for siding; the third is a grainboard for partitions and paneling; the fourth a panel board for superior paneling, and the fifth a tileboard, which, after its application, is enameled to an imitation of tile.

"CUPID AT YOUR ELBOW" AIDS HAMBURG DANCERS

Amorous night lifers are offered "Cupid at Your Elbow" by a fashionable Hamburg dancing pavilion. The modern Cupid bearing tender messages is a house telephone installed at each table.

"Cupid at Your Elbow" works in this manner. The male guest of the establishment, seating himself at one of the tables grouped about the dance floor, surveys the hall with a view to espying some girl among the dancers that especially strikes his fancy. His choice falls, say, upon the pretty brunette at Table 15. He turns the disk of the telephone at his elbow to No. 15. A little red light at Table 15 blinks discreetly until the girl takes off the receiver.

"Please may I have the next dance with you?"

queries the man of the world in a voice audible to the woman of his choice only, as it is lost to others amid the din of jazz music. Receiving a favorable reply he can come to Table 15 without risking a turndown.

RESTAURANT GUEST BOOK RECORDS BATTLE OF WITS OF CELEBRITIES

Celebrities of the past penned wise sayings in the guest book of the Pall Mall Restaurant, Haymarket, which make this volume a priceless echo of the past.

Its pages are a battle of wit. Patti wrote: "A beautiful voice is a gift of God. Yvett Guilbert wrote on the next page: "An ugly voice is the gift of God." Rider Haggard followed with: "But the greatest gift of God is silence."

After a performance of "Camille" Bernhardt came into the restaurant while very nervous and wrote something in long sloping letters that nobody has ever been able to read. Perhaps she intended it should not be read.

George Edwards, the theatrical manager, immediately after Ada Reeve had obtained a divorce from him, wrote in the book: "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still." On the next page Miss Reeve wrote: "George, ditto, ditto, ditto."

Edward Morton, who was another party in the divorce action, wrote: "And I love them both."

SMOKE AND FUMES ARE ELIMINATED BY GOOD OIL BURNER.

Old-fashioned heating methods are so out of line with modern living that in the construction of Model Homes today the correctly designed oil burner is used without question as the proper means of lending health and comfort to the habitation.

Smoke, gas, soot and cinders, all an unavoidable part of out-dated heating arrangements, are a menace to the health of those who live in homes where oil has not been adopted. Smoke shuts out the ultra-violet rays of the sun, which are known definitely to build bodily resistance and to have distinct gerimicidal results. It promotes anemia and rickets, the latter an especial menace to growing children. Gases and soot encourage respiratory diseases.

It is no wonder, then, that those planning model houses today see to it that the best type oil burner is installed.

An oil burner of this type, besides giving comfort to the home and contributing to the health of its inhabitants, has advantages of cleanliness enjoyed with no other method of heating. Curtains, draperies, wall paper and floor covering stay clean longer and are not damaged by the fumes that result from coal combustion. Using an oil burner saves space and releases basement room for other purposes, giving a warm, clean indoor play space if it is desired. It even helps in the designing of a new home by permitting the construction of a larger house through the various economies that are made possible when the old-fashioned, inefficient, space-consuming heating methods of the past are eliminated.

TIMELY TOPICS

PAINT COVERS CHIPS ON NICKEL

Worn spots on nickel or places where it has chipped off can be improved by touching up with aluminum paint. While this does not make the most effective remedy, it helps considerably and may prevent further wearing or chipping.

TOURIST NEED TO TALK FAST

If the tourist feels compelled to ask a traffic officer for information he should make his inquiry terse and to the point. One action that brings criticism upon the tourist is that he takes up too much of the traffic officer's time and delays the local driver.

LONDON TAILORS MAKE CLOTHES ON CONTRACT

A firm of Savile Row tailors has prepared a schedule of prices for dressing men in the latest London modes by yearly contract. The customer pays a stated amount for the year and takes his choice of the tailor's materials when new garments are required.

Dressing by contract is not new as far as English society women are concerned. The better London dressmakers adopted this plan some years ago.

OAKLAND-PONTIAC SALES ATTAIN NEW PEAK IN MAY

"May production of Oakland-Pontiac sixes smashed all previous monthly records for the company and enabled us to deliver 24,060 cars to dealers, thereby setting up a new record 20 per cent higher than last month, which was the biggest month in the company's history," according to a statement issued by W. R. Tracy, vice-president in charge of sales.

"Twice so far this year new records have been set for monthly production, the other being for April, when 19,926 Oaklands and Pontiacs were produced. Yet May's figures topped this by more than 4,000 cars, the third highest production month being August, when 19,977 cars were manufactured."

LINDBERGH VERSE ADDED TO WISCONSIN'S SONG

A verse has been added to the song of the University of Wisconsin as the result of the Lindbergh flight. The now famous aviator attended the institution for a short time. An enthusiastic admirer, Carl Beck, wrote the verse in honor of Lindbergh's homecoming, to the tune of the university's march, "On Wisconsin."

Here it is:

Hail to Lindbergh! Our brave Lindbergh!
Viking of the air! Night and storm and sea you
conquered,
Alone, the first to dare! Hail to Lindbergh, our
brave Lindbergh!
To the world you stand! For the courage, strength
and manhood
Of our land!

GOLDEN PLATE OF KING GEORGE UNDER CARE OF SPECIAL GUARD

Magnificent gold plate is used by Queen Mary and King George at state banquets given to rulers of other countries when they visit England.

Although these functions generally take place at Buckingham Palace, London, the precious tableware is stored at Windsor Castle, twenty miles away.

The removal of the plate to London from Windsor is no light matter. It is brought in an armored van, sheathed, drawn by two or more bay horses, and with four outriders for protection.

The gold plates consists of a dinner service for 100 guests, complete with tureens, meat dishes, entree dishes and covers, a fruit service and a coffee service. Golden candelabra are used as table decorations. These are from three to four feet high, and branch in all directions.

The golden service is kept in the strong room at Windsor Castle. Each article has a separate pigeon hole and each hole a separate lock. The guard is a silversmith and goldsmith, for he must clean gold plates without any loss of weight or value.

EUROPEAN STATION OWNERS' GROUP ELECT U. S. MEMBER

Further indications of the international aspect of radio and the desirability, if not the actual necessity at this time, of broadcasters throughout the world to work in cooperation with reference to their plans for expansion and development are afforded in the announcement contained in a letter just received by officials of the Radio World's Fair from the Union Internationale de Radiophonie that the National Broadcasting Company has been elected an associate member of the union.

"We have always been keenly interested in America's great work for broadcasting," writes Arthur H. Burrows, secretary general, who was one of the world pioneers in broadcasting, first to transmit a musical program from a ship at sea and, as one of the directors of the British Broadcasting Company, the first to write a book on broadcasting.

Mr. Burrows expresses his regrets at not being able to come to New York on September 19 to be a guest of honor at the Radio World's Fair. It is impossible for him to leave Europe on account of the many meetings of various commissions on wireless activities in which he must participate. It was at these sessions last year that the re-allocation of European wave lengths was approved and cleared away the heterodyning that marred reception in England, France and elsewhere as badly as air congestion here has been doing.

The work of the Federal Radio Commission follows the line of the Union Internationale de Radiophonie because the readjustment of wave lengths and power among American stations must take in consideration frequencies used in Canada, Mexico and Cuba and, probably in a few years, South America.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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